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EDITORIAL NOTICE.—Contributions are not invited, but will be considered provided a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed for their return if unsuitable. They should be typewritten.

## Notes of the Week

PRINCESS MARY has been popular, both in society and with the larger world, ever since she began to go about and take her part in the public activities of the Royal House. She is, in her tastes and temperament, a typically English girl, and her betrothal to Lord Lascelles is another step towards what, without offence, we may call the anglicising of our Royal Family. As such it will give real pleasure throughout the Empire, coming as a sweet and wholesome touch of nationality at a time when people seem to be bent on neutralising or extinguishing the national sense without being sure of what is coming in its place. We offer our sincere good wishes to Her Royal Highness and to Lord Lascelles.

Englishmen, who until lately were notorious for their political rivalry, have nowadays not only ceased to take an interest, intelligent or otherwise, in politics, but seem even to be unmoved concerning the welfare of their country. At the present time, when not one but several issues of supreme importance to the Empire are being decided—issues which in pre-war days would have convulsed the country in a paroxysm of political antagonisms—the general attitude of both press and public is marked by a placid indifference. This apathy, induced at least in part by the decline of Parliament and the establishment of a virtual dictatorship in the person of the Prime Minister, is not the least dangerous symptom at an extremely critical moment of our history.

Are solemn pledges, given to Ulster by the Unionist party, broken by a Government predominantly Unionist? And has a bargain been made with Sinn Fein that implies the literal negation of "Unionist" principles? Hardly a Unionist from Thurso to Land's End has raised a voice in protest. Have the Egyptian delegates, who for so long have been discussing an Anglo-Egyptian agreement, broken off negotiations and gone to prepare a war against the Empire in their country?

Is the Communist party of Great Britain left undisturbed to conduct an insidious campaign in favour of revolution and the ruin of industry? Has the Government become a party to the indiscriminate reduction of that arm of defence upon which the whole existence of the Empire depends, and entered into this agreement without so much as a word of reference to Parliament? Perhaps. But the public reads of these things with mute acquiescence and passes on to the more absorbing topic of the Landru trial or the latest details from the divorce courts.

The apathy regarding Disarmament is amazing, but even more astonishing is the complacency with which the Press as a whole accepts and adds to the protestations of high-mindedness which have inspired the American move. Our knowledge of the Americans leads us to believe that their idealism is not unmixed with a certain astuteness of mind which is hardly likely to have been absent when they drew up their present proposals. Indeed, Mr. Secretary Hughes has himself said "We are taking no chances," and while the British Government has issued orders—unwisely, as we think—to stop the building of battleships, American Naval Dockyards continue to work at full pressure.

With the regrettable illness of Sir James Craig the Irish negotiations have been at a standstill during the week. With the exception of one or two resignations from Sir James Craig's Ministry the position is where we left it last week. The most significant aspect of the situation is that Sinn Fein remains completely in the background and has been hardly mentioned in any of the newspapers. The refusal of the Prime Minister to publish the correspondence, the constant delays, and the deliberate turning of the limelight on Ulster have worked wonders for the Prime Minister's policy. As long as the illusion can be kept up that the Southern Irish delegates are merely standing by, patiently waiting for the obdurate Ulstermen to make up their minds, the deliberately-conveyed impression will become more deeply impressed on the public mind and more generally diffused. This is Mr. Lloyd George's game. It is therefore more than ever important that it should be exposed, for events may develop very rapidly in the next few days and Ulster may lose ground in British public opinion which she will find it difficult to recover.

A quarrel, none the less furious because it has been couched in diplomatic language, has been proceeding between the Ulster Cabinet and Downing Street. Sir James Craig is rightly indignant at Mr. Lloyd George's refusal to publish the correspondence and thereby allow the Ulstermen to have their fair share of public goodwill. The Prime Minister's action is surely indefensible. We press for the production of documents which will show the reasons for Sir James Craig's refusal to enter the Conference. Why should we have our minds made up for us by Downing Street? We recommend to those newspapers who are so consistently supporting Ulster in this business that they could not render Ulster a better service than to join us in our appeal. Five minutes conversation with those intimately concerned in the negotiations would convince them of the truth of what we say. For our part we make the demand without prejudice to the view which we shall take when the respective attitudes of the negotiating parties become more clearly defined.

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Great pressure is being brought on Sir James Craig to give way, especially by the financial interests. Our exposure last week of Mr. Lloyd George's trump-card of a tariff war between the South and North of Ireland has not been without its effect. Mr. Lloyd George feels that he can rely on events to coerce Ulster, but he would like Ulster to give way before the event. It is now clear that Sir James Craig will be unwise to place too much reliance on the support of the Die-Hards. As we have said all along theirs was a purely political move, and as soon as the policy no longer suits them they will be able to reconcile their consciences with some pressure of Ulster. In fact the whole of this Irish business has sunk deep into the morass of politics, and if the politicians can only extricate themselves by pressing Ulster more deeply into the mire they will not hesitate to do so. If Sir James Craig wishes to save Ulster he must not rely on the future; he must act now. And if Mr. Lloyd George refuses to publish the correspondence let Sir James Craig do it himself.

Individual members of the Cabinet were not at all pleased with Sir Laming Worthington-Evans's speech at Liverpool which was delivered after we went to press last week. We understand that Mr. Lloyd George was particularly angry. He considered that Sir Laming had made a miscalculation of the forces against him. Sir Laming certainly made his own position as a Die-Hard quite clear. He has now wholly pledged himself, and it is difficult to see how he can get out of the business unless Ulster gives way without much resistance. Our own view is that he adopted the right course and his clear and concise statement of his principles did much to revive goodwill in the Conservative ranks. Sir Laming is not the man to make enemies by his public utterances. Whatever Mr. Lloyd George may think about the tactical advisability of renewing pledges, Sir Laming played an honourable part in setting Ulster's worst fears at rest. He also evidently made some converts amongst the Die-Hards themselves.

At the same time that the public as a whole is beginning to consider the probabilities of a General Election, the party caucuses are relaxing the fervour of their preparations. A few months ago, when the negotiations began with Sinn Féin, the fires in the Whips' offices were being stoked to fever heat. The implements now fall from the stokers' hands. It has been realised in Downing Street, as it is being realised elsewhere, that there is no need for a General Election. Mr. Lloyd George may, following the precedent of Mr. Gladstone, introduce a Dominion Home Rule Bill for Ireland in the face of Ulster. This may involve resignations from his Cabinet as it did from Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet in 1886. That will be the time for Mr. Lloyd George to go to the country. If he carry his Cabinet with him for the purposes of the Bill, he may not have to go to the country on Ireland at all. The early prospect of a General Election may therefore be discounted for the present unless new elements are introduced into the situation.

The most significant event of the week is the collapse of Mr. Bonar Law. Last week there was hardly a newspaper which was not discussing the idea of his prospective Premiership. His claims were canvassed; his plans outlined. Not only was he a serious rival to Mr. Lloyd George, he was actually sharpening his stiletto. But if he appeared with dramatic suddenness, with dramatic suddenness he has disappeared again. We never thought much of his claims, and we treated his appearance rather as a comic relief. We foreshadowed that he might produce a plan of his own. Indeed, we said that his only chance of upsetting the Prime Minister was to produce a plan of his own. Mr. Lloyd George, who knew as well as we did, has profited by his usual astuteness. Behold the imposing rival

turned collaborator! He is, we are informed, actually assisting in the negotiations. Did Mr. Bonar Law fail to learn a lesson which should hardly have escaped one who was for so long associated with the Prime Minister?

With the death of Mr. H. M. Hyndman the last of the Victorian Socialists has passed away. His Socialism was less intellectual than moral, and it sprang from a desire to see the culture of music and of books filter through the clogged interstices of the older academies and other so-called centres of learning. In this respect he was a colleague of William Morris. His internationalism too was the internationalism of the Victorian era, the internationalism of sentiment and of Liberalism. It was not the internationalism of the Third Internationale. The acid test with him, as with other Victorians, was the War; and it revealed the secret that internationalism with such men had never been more than a vague spirit of comradeship. Although Mr. Hyndman was an educated man he had nothing in common with the socialism of those well-educated young men of to-day who divide their time between the *Daily Herald* and Murray's Club.

As making for general economic stability it must be regarded as a good thing that the Reparation Commission, on which Sir John Bradbury is the chief British representative, has intimated, after investigation in Berlin, that Germany will be able to pay in January and February next the sums of money assigned on account of reparations. Together the sums amount to about 39 millions sterling at par of exchange. Germany can pay them, but how long she will be in a position to pay in accordance with the further programme of reparations is another matter. To raise the cash needed for the January and February payments Dr. Wirth, the German Chancellor, to whom M. Briand paid a noble tribute in his speech at Washington on Monday, told the Commission that he accepted the principle of a foreign loan, and he has appealed for assistance to the rich German industrialists, whose credit must be pledged for such a loan. If we consider in this connexion the visit of Herr Stinnes to London, and Lord Birkenhead's speech on international finance at the Aldwych Club, together with the almost universal expert opinion that we should cancel our war debts, we may find some glimmer of hope for the restoration of stability to world finance.

Though little official information is available on the subject, it is well known that the return to Cairo of Adly Pasha and the Egyptian Delegation indicates that the negotiations for giving a new political status to Egypt has broken down. As we said a fortnight ago would probably be the case, the failure to come to terms was occasioned by the refusal of Adly Pasha to accept what our Government considered were adequate guarantees for the security of the great British interests in Egypt, including the Suez Canal; there was also the question of the Sudan which the Egyptians wanted settled in their favour. In the circumstances the nature of the guarantees required is and can be nothing other than military, and effectively military. After the riots that occurred last spring in Alexandria, with much loss to foreign communities, it is uncertain to what extent the Egyptians can really be trusted with independence, and it is necessary therefore to maintain British garrisons in the country for the preservation of order. This is the plain truth of the situation, and our Government is, we think, thoroughly justified in its attitude. Egypt is in too much of a hurry. But surely some scheme can be devised by which, according as the Egyptians manifest their competence in self-government, the garrisons can gradually be reduced and even withdrawn from places outside the Canal zone.



We are glad to learn that our Government was engaged in the serious consideration, at the meeting of the Cabinet on Tuesday, of the question of establishing peace in the Near East—a question which we have repeatedly urged should be settled with all possible speed. No one can deny that an agreement with the Turks, as represented by Mustafa Kemal and the Angora Assembly, will put an end to, or at any rate greatly mitigate, hostile pressure in Mesopotamia and in India. The situation has of course been rendered difficult and complicated by the pact between France and the Kemalists, of which we still lack anything like complete information. It is the subject of an acute controversy between London and Paris that does not appear to be leading to any very desirable result. It is only right, however, to say that the situation has been further prejudiced by our Government's mistakes in policy in the past, and we hope that no more mistakes will be made. What is wanted in this whole business is to come to an understanding with France about the Near East, and then to take up the matter jointly with the Turks; but the fact will have to be faced that Mustafa Kemal is stronger now than he was some months ago owing to the Greek retreat from before Angora and his pact with France.

We imagine that everyone in this country who read M. Briand's Washington speech was greatly surprised and disappointed, to put it very mildly indeed, that it contained no reference to the great services which were rendered during the war to France by Britain and the Empire, but we trust that the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* is wrong in describing the omission as a "studied insult to England," for that way madness lies. The matter was rectified, so far as the Conference itself was concerned, when Mr. Balfour, speaking in general support of M. Briand (who as he listened must have felt how generously his behaviour in this respect was passed over), referred to the heavy sacrifices of life which the British had made—chiefly in and for France, though this he did not say, but left it to be inferred. As regards the limitation of land armaments no one here who realises the special and peculiar position of France with respect to Germany supposes that any considerable reduction of her army is possible in her present mood. But at the same time we think it well to point out that, with the exception of Japan—who in this connexion need not be taken into account—France is the greatest military Power in the world, and she has an army on a peace footing of about a million pretty well prepared for war. This being the case, it does not seem that she need be so afraid of Germany as she professes to be.

It is certainly the best of news that the Indian tour of the Prince of Wales is proceeding so well that it can truthfully be described as triumphant. We had always been confident that the winning personality of the Prince would not fail to work its usual magic if given a chance, and it is characteristic of him that he not only takes the chances given, but makes opportunities for himself of which he knows how to avail himself to the full. Of course he is only at the beginning of his tour, but judging by what has already happened it appears altogether likely that he will march from success to success. Old Anglo-Indians, with a long and varied experience of the native populations, assure us that after such a splendid start, which will echo and re-echo throughout all Hindustan, everything will continue to go well with him. Even the rioting at Bombay, which at the moment had an ugly look, will, we are told, tend to heighten the wonderful impression he is making, for did not that rioting lead to the penitent confession by Gandhi, the apostle of "civil disobedience," that he had been mistaken in his campaign, and therefore must do penance? For our part we do not trust Gandhi, no matter how penitent he professes him-

self to be, for we remember that he has had such moods before—and that they did not last very long.

Convoked at the instance of our Government the Council of the League of Nations, which met in Paris last week, was not required, as it turned out, to take extreme measures to bring about a settlement of the dispute between Yugo-Slavia, or rather Serbia, and little Albania. At its meeting the representatives of the two combatant peoples announced that they had accepted the decision regarding their respective frontiers which had been given by the Ambassadors' Conference, though it was stated that the Belgrade Government had done so with certain reserves, but would immediately withdraw its troops from Albanian territory. We can now look for a satisfactory end of the trouble, and we ask again, as we asked weeks ago, why it was that this Conference was so dilatory in taking up this matter? Much bloodshed and suffering would have been prevented if it had acted more quickly.

After negotiations that have been going on for a considerable time at Kabul, a treaty of friendship, as the India Office officially describes it, has been signed between Britain and Afghanistan which recognises the complete independence of the latter, and reaffirms the frontier demarcated in 1919, "with a slight realignment," which is not particularised. The main part of this is very much what was to be expected after our surrender to the Amir in 1919 of the right to control the foreign relations of his country. Afghanistan is now to be represented in London by a Minister, and there is to be a British Minister in Kabul, an arrangement which would appear to mean that the India Government will have a less direct political interest in Afghanistan. On the other hand Afghanistan has given "satisfactory written assurances"—to judge by the wording of the official communication, these assurances are not embodied in the treaty—that no Russian consulates will be permitted in the areas adjoining the frontier of India. This is good so far as it goes, but it does not go very far at a time when Russian pressure, in the shape of Soviet intrigue, is extremely formidable in India, and it remains to be seen how genuinely sincere is the friendship of the Amir.

The new economists seem to think that by making a service worse and increasing its cost they take the surest road to prosperity and profit. That, at any rate, is the philosophy of the Post Office, although the hard logic of facts is gradually convincing them that their balance-sheet will not have the desired results. In the circumstances it is refreshing to find that after a very few months' trial of the new economy the London General Omnibus Company, which is run on more businesslike principles than the Post Office, has decided to revert at the end of this month to the penny fare. Somewhat naively the Underground Companies have announced that they are vitally affected by the action of the L.C.C. in making extensive reductions in their fares, and that they are forced to do likewise in the L.C.C. area. Never did competition receive a better compliment. The penny has a sentimental value in this country over and above its intrinsic worth. The people indeed will spend three pennies where they will not spend one 1½d., as any user of postcards will tell Mr. Kellaway, even though he has not a competing company to teach him so obvious a lesson.

We deplore the decision of the Royal Air Force to erect a special R.A.F. Memorial on a site on the Victoria Embankment. The dead of all three Forces are commemorated in the Cenotaph and again in the Abbey Grave, and it seems unnecessary to add to the many useless and impersonal monuments which already crowd our public places. If as a nation we had a genius for sculptural art the matter would be different. But in the circumstances it would seem better to accept

our poverty in this respect, and to spend instead the money subscribed upon some object of municipal utility or even use it to further the ends of one of the many charities which deserve, but do not always receive, public support.

Nothing bewilders the ordinary person of literary tastes, when he surveys the second-hand book market, so much as the difference in the values of books by the same author. A case in point is Lord Byron, many of the first editions of whose works are hardly of any value at all. Yet a few days since a fine copy of his 'Poems on Various Occasions' sold at auction for £235. There is, of course, the simple explanation that, though Byron is an author temporarily out of fashion, the 'Poems' printed by the Newark bookseller, Ridge, in 1807, is a very rare book, of which only a hundred copies were done for private circulation, and that there is almost always a market, more or less independent of fluctuations of taste, for really rare books by great authors. This particular book, moreover, is almost Byron's first, though not quite, for in 1806 the same Ridge printed a volume called 'Fugitive Pieces.' The poet's clerical friend, Becher, however, objected to one poem, and Byron destroyed the whole edition, save two copies. A copy of the 1807 volume, which belonged to the poet's half-sister, was sold recently in America for fourteen hundred dollars, but we imagine that last week's price must be about the record for a Byron book with no special personal associations.

## In the Wilderness

A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

Downing Street, 26 November, 1921

THE personal ascendancy of one man in the State, be he king or prime minister, is a contingency which our political philosophy does not contemplate. It is a thing alien to our habits and unknown to the laws of this realm. Yet it exists. The first symptoms of the erosion of our constitution and its foundation and security, the House of Commons, are observable in the personal ascendancy of the Prime Minister. In a country where a parliament is a fact and not a fiction arbitrary power cannot be exercised. In England Parliament is at present not only a fiction but a farce. The forces contributing to the degradation of Parliament are both intrinsic and extrinsic. In so far as they are intrinsic the Prime Minister has been aided by fortuitous circumstances; but in so far as they are extrinsic he alone is responsible. To the everlasting shame of this country be it said, the man who now occupies the most respectable office which our democracy can offer has contributed to the degradation of the representative assembly as though he relied on that degradation to obtain a position of personal supremacy. Whatever the justification for this course during the war the position has in the three years since the Armistice been consolidated with every sign of being maintained.

Circumstances, then, have helped the Prime Minister to gain for himself a pre-eminence which is not entirely of his own making. The overwhelming business of Parliament and the absorption of Ministers in their thousand and one duties; the increase in the number of Standing Committees; the concurrent sittings of committees with the Commons; the strain on the legislative machine; the rule regularising the kangaroo closure by making the power of selecting amendments for debate a permanent attribute of the authority of the chair—these causes and many others have made adequate debate of the measures before Parliament impossible, and relieved Ministers of the Crown and Members of the House of that time and opportunity for reflection which alone render good legislation possible.

Again, the peculiar conditions of the last General Election, in which men not schooled in the great traditions of British statecraft were indiscriminately returned to Westminster, and in which long and sagacious service was of itself a barrier to the popular good will, were not of course conducive to the credit of representative government. Then, the very existence of a Coalition between the two great parties of the State—parties which historically are opposed in principle—of itself postulates a surrender of freedom. But there have been other and more sinister forces at work.

Quite apart from these fortuitous circumstances it is my purpose to examine the process by which a once free assembly has been deliberately debauched and the methods by which a once proud assembly has been bent to the purposes of a strong personal will. The profuse bestowal of honours has played its inevitable part. The old Orders did not suffice, and two new ones had to be created and scattered with a prodigality unprecedented in the annals of patronage. With such generosity has the Order of the British Empire been disbursed that it alone, in point of numbers, swamps all the older Orders put together. In the House of Commons there now sit no less than 100 men bound to the Prime Minister by marks of distinction received at his hand. There are others who daily await the fulfilment of their expectations.

It is interesting to note before we leave this unpleasant subject that nearly 100 peerages have been granted since January, 1917. The evil of the business is perhaps most visible in this, that the larger proportion of the gentlemen who now sit in the Lower Chamber are enjoying admittedly transient and fortuitous political careers. To such men politics are no more than an incident. Who shall be surprised if they put their opportunities to advantage while they may? They have not been slow to realise that on the favours of the Prime Minister depends the satisfaction of their ambitions and that his displeasure is sufficient to determine their political lives. Shall we wonder if such men have transferred their gratitude from the people to whom they owe their accidental political existence to the Prime Minister, their benefactor? In the vulgar phrase, they know on which side their bread is buttered.

It is not only by gratitude or by the anticipation of favours to come that the Prime Minister can count on support for his varying policies. Were it so, the evil might be stanchd. But there is another and a more cynical attribute of human nature which the Prime Minister has not forgotten. The motive of interest he has turned to his advantage. If a comparative table of those who have an official interest in the maintenance of the present administration be set out it will be seen how heavily it has the advantage over the pre-war administrations. The actual number of members of the Cabinet happens to be roughly the same, but that is of no importance since Cabinet Government has virtually ceased to exist. The difference between Mr. Asquith's 1914 administration and the present administration is to be looked for in the fringe of ministries outside the Cabinet.

Of Ministers, Under-Secretaries and others in official positions outside the Cabinet in the House of Commons in 1914 there were 22 and 9 Peers; to-day the numbers are nearly doubled. They are 42 and 17 respectively. In addition there are a considerable number of extra Private Parliamentary Secretaries to Parliamentary Secretaries to Ministers, and Private Parliamentary Secretaries to Parliamentary Secretaries, and there are those other Members of the House who occupy more or less official positions without well defined titles. In short there are more than 70 members of the House of Commons directly concerned in the business of



government whose votes can be depended upon. By gratitude, by interest or by ambition the Prime Minister can rely on the support of no less than twenty-five per cent. of the existing members of the House of Commons. Is it an exaggeration to say that the Prime Minister has written the blackest page in English political history?

It were ridiculous to talk of policies until this virus is pumped out of the veins of the body politic. Far more important than policy is the reconstruction of the foundation of our Constitution. Parliament must be purged. It must be reinvigorated with health. The disease must be cured as physicians cure consumption. The unhealthy symptoms for which the present Prime Minister is responsible must be exposed. The patient must be taken out into the open where he can be subject to fresh healthy and revivifying influences.

THE MAN WITH A LAMP

(To be Continued.)

### WITHOUT THE BATTLE CRUISERS

**S**URTOUT pas trop de zèle, said Talleyrand, and the words were meant not as a cynic's discouragement of enthusiasm, but as a wise man's warning to politicians to look before they leaped. Our politicians have, however, leapt without looking or even troubling to consult Parliament. They have "dramatically decided" to abandon the construction of the four battle-cruisers which have just been ordered. They have done this offhand, quite unconstitutionally, so that no one knows who is really responsible, in harum-scarum fashion, on the theory that a complete and satisfactory disarmament agreement is as good as reached at Washington. This is not really the case. Tedious negotiations may be necessary before that agreement is completed, and there may be a long interval before it comes into force. And there are two possibilities which cannot be overlooked. Japan may not assent: she is holding out for an allowance of capital ship tonnage 70 per cent. that of the United States, instead of the 60 per cent. which Mr. Hughes has offered her. Or the agreement when completed may be rejected by the Senate, especially if Mr. Hughes makes concessions to Japan which arouse the ire of the American Press, already exceedingly hostile to Japan.

Meantime new construction, suspended in Great Britain, proceeds in the United States and Japan. Yet it certainly did not rest with us to make fresh sacrifices in the cause of disarmament. We gave a "bold lead" three years ago, immediately after the Armistice, when we broke up ships on the most heroic scale. A comparison of the first Navy List issued after the war, that of January, 1919, with the current number, will show how wholesale the destruction has been. There were dozens of other ships under construction which do not appear, and which were broken up. Among them were the *Anson*, *Howe* and *Rodney*, all three sisters of the *Hood*, which were well advanced. They were reduced to scrap, as 127 battle-ships and cruisers and 406 torpedo craft were, leaving the British Navy weak in many important classes of ship. It is not generally realised that since 1914 we have only laid down and completed three armoured ships, the *Hood*, *Renown* and *Repulse*, and the two last are of a weak type, carrying only six heavy guns (15-in.) against the twelve heavy guns (14-in.) of contemporary American and Japanese ships. When we scrapped on this scale it was in the confident belief that other naval Powers would do the same. Nothing of the kind happened. Mr. Daniels and Mr. Wilson pressed forward an American programme of such dimensions that it caused surprise throughout the world. Theodore Roosevelt, who did not mince his words, described the force provided under it as a "spite-navy," constructed to annoy Powers which had resolutely refused to accept the

"freedom of the seas." Japan took alarm, and she followed the American programme ship by ship; and has up to the present spent about £25,000,000 on her new programmes. The American outlay has probably been quite thrice that sum.

If, then, there was to be another "bold lead," there was no reason why it should have come from us. Indeed there are strong reasons why it should not. The abandonment of the four new British battle-cruisers will sound the knell for the British armour and gun plants in private hands and will throw over 25,000 men employed at Glasgow, Sheffield and Newcastle out of work. There will be other dismissals on a large scale at an early date at the great industrial centres and dockyard towns, for it is sheer puerility, and dishonest into the bargain, to pretend that repair-work for a Navy reduced to one-third the old size will keep the people of these places in employment and existence. The savings which the taxpayer has been vaguely promised are vanishing into smoke already, and it is being recognised that special relief measures or subsidies to the dockyard towns and gun and armour plants will be requisite. The country will get nothing for that expenditure except embarrassment, whereas if it built the battle-cruisers it would employ its workers and obtain security—an asset which, after all, is of importance in economic life. The public should note, by the way, the alacrity with which the politicians fall on the Navy with their "economy axe," and contrast it with their signal reluctance to scrap "unproductive" and costly departments such as the Labour Ministry and the Labour Exchanges.

Not only are the battle-cruisers to go, but, by the 29th clause of the United States scheme, British shipbuilders are to be forbidden in future to build warships for any Power. "No capital ship tonnage nor auxiliary combatant craft tonnage shall be constructed for foreign account within the jurisdiction of any one of the Powers party to this agreement." That means the transfer to Ansaldo and other foreign firms of an industry once pre-eminently British, unless the whole world is included in the agreement, in which case it is safe to predict several years' delay. In surrendering work for foreign navies the United States makes no sacrifice. American yards cannot equal British yards in efficiency, originality of design, and cheapness of construction. It is on our shaken and exhausted people, burdened with debts not only of our own but also for our allies, that the sacrifice falls. That the Japanese shipbuilding industry will be paralysed and acute distress be caused in that country affords no relief here.

Once more it is vital to point out that our allowance of cruisers and auxiliary craft under the United States scheme makes no provision whatever for the defence of our commerce. Against the *Emden* and *Karlsruhe*, two solitary and not very powerful vessels, we had to concentrate first and last over twenty ships, and even then we were unable to prevent them from inflicting grievous loss. There is no security whatever in the American proposals against the construction of fast liners which will be capable of instant conversion into commerce-destroyers of a most troublesome type. No regulations have been proposed for that end, and it is not clear that any can be. Here it is true, as with air war, that commercial craft can in a few hours be "readily adapted" for war purposes. In view of this fact, states Mr. Hughes's scheme, "it is not considered practicable to prescribe the limits for naval aircraft." Thus in two most important directions the scheme is worthless if there is any will to war. If there is the will to peace among those who possess navies it is not obvious that the scheme is required, especially as it will involve a good deal of annoying interference in such directions as regular inspection of dockyards and plants by international commissions.

What our armament firms are to turn out will

doubtless be explained by our politicians. The public may remember that in days now remote, when the engineering industry was in danger, it was urged to work on "jams and pickles." Are Armstrongs and Beardmores to make rustless knives and forks or agricultural machinery and motor cars? The heavy steel forging industry in this country, vital for national security, was only kept alive in the teeth of foreign competition between 1900 and 1914 by Admiralty orders and the resolute refusal to accept shafting from Germany. Such orders are now to cease for ten years. But the heavy steel forging industry of the United States will remain in existence because of the policy of tariff prohibition there adopted. The heavy steel forging industry of Germany will remain; and the world has not done with Germany yet.

A policy which abroad sets the interests of foreign nations above the security and existence of the British Empire, as at home it sets Irish tribal interests above British interests, requires more explanation than has yet been vouchsafed. Generosity at your own expense is a noble thing. But Coleridge spoke the truth when he said a century ago, "the cosmopolitanism which does not spring out of and blossom upon the deep-rooted stem of nationality or patriotism is a spurious and rotten growth." The politician who sacrifices the British Navy does not sacrifice himself. It is not with his money and blood that the price of his idealism has to be paid.

#### THE ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE

IT might be imagined from what appears in the majority of the newspapers of the United States that not only is the Anglo-Japanese Alliance included in the scope of the Washington Conference, but that the abrogation of that Alliance, in deference to American opinion, is assumed to be inevitable. It is even said that the agreement by the British delegates to the proposals for naval disarmament put forward by Mr. Secretary Hughes has implicit in it the setting aside of the Alliance. What representations our delegates have made to Mr. Hughes or other Americans respecting the continuance or otherwise of the Alliance we do not know, but none can fail to be aware of what American sentiment is in this matter. For some considerable time past a strong campaign has been waged throughout the United States against the Alliance. Some journals have gone so far as to hint, not at all obscurely, that to do away with it was one of the principal reasons for the calling of the Conference. And all this in spite of the fact that more than one authoritative British statement, including official answers in Parliament to questions on the subject, have declared unequivocally that in no case and in no circumstances could the Alliance be conceived of as being inimical to the United States, and that whatever outside Power or Powers it might be directed against, it never could, would or should be directed against America. Yet as late as Saturday last Mr. Frank Simonds, a well-known American writer, said in a telegram from Washington to the *Pall Mall Gazette* that it was the American Government's view that the maintenance of the Alliance by the British Government would be interpreted as the "negation of the many gestures of friendliness coming from the United Kingdom." As if, heaven knows, we had not made a far more than sufficient gesture of friendliness in accepting the American proposals for our naval disarmament—proposals to which, it is not too much to say, the erstwhile Mistress of the Seas has agreed with a meekness that, whether it is sublime or not, is certainly tragic. Japan may be conciliatory, but she is not submissive, as her war with Russia showed, and we are not at all surprised that she has refused to accept the American proposals as they apply to her navy, which, though not her all in all, as the Navy is with us, is still indispensable to her security.

But while we do not think that the Alliance ought to be dissolved because of British "friendliness" to America, or under pressure from American "friendliness" to Britain, we are none the less in favour of its discontinuance. Both the British and the Japanese Governments have stated that a change in its terms is necessary to bring it into harmony with the Covenant of the League of Nations; but as neither has announced what that change is, we are left in the dark. In our opinion the only change should be the out-and-out change of doing away with the thing altogether. We regret that it is the case that, as we said in a leading article two weeks ago on 'The Truth about the Washington Conference,' it is not without cause that the Alliance is suspect in the United States. It is also suspect, we might have added, in China and in all the British communities in the Far East. It is hateful to admit, as in justice it must be admitted, that the Alliance has worked against its fundamental principle, which was the preservation of the complete independence and territorial integrity of China, with equal opportunity for the trade and industry of all nations in that vast and populous country. At the start the basis of the Alliance was not so much British or Japanese "friendliness" to China, though that was supposed to be implied, but British fear of Russia—a fear on which Japanese statesmen of the day played very cleverly, as is recorded in his 'Secret Memoirs' by Count Hayashi. He was one of the makers of the Alliance; he was Minister, and later Ambassador, in London, and still later a director of Japan's foreign policy at Tokyo under the "Elder Statesmen"; and he ought to know. Originally the Alliance protected Korea from aggression, but after Japan's war with Russia Korea was gradually brought under Japanese control and then annexed by Japan; to this, however, America was in effect a consenting party. As a result of her success over Russia Japan possessed herself in Manchuria of whatever rights Russia had under treaties with China, and her action there has ever since been in one and the same direction, namely, the absorption of that great and fertile region which contains a small Manchu but a large and ever-growing Chinese population, and the absolute exclusion from it of all foreign trade and industry other than Japanese.

The story of Japan's aggressions with regard to China is much too long even to admit of condensation in a leading article. But the heart of the matter is that while it is true that Britain has occasionally interfered to restrain Japan, as notably was the case respecting the famous Twenty-one Demands that Japan tried to force China to accept in 1915, she has not often done so. On the contrary we have often been Japan's accessory, willingly or unwillingly; sometimes, perhaps, unwillingly enough, as her interests and those of her nationals have suffered not a little in the process, for Japan knows no compunction. What has happened was well put by Lord Northcliffe in an address at Peking last week when he said, according to a Reuter message published in the *Times* on Monday, that the Alliance "had benefited Japan beyond her wildest dreams." We note that he pronounces against the continuance of the Alliance for the reason that Japan's policy is militarist and expansionist, as the map of China clearly shows to-day, and that no change need be expected so long as she is governed by the Yamagata junta. This, we believe, is true, and we are amused to see that the Northcliffe press, hitherto mobilised on the side of "our Ally, Japan," has promptly gone round on the other tack, and asks "What use is the Alliance?" Lord Northcliffe has seen enough to come to the conclusion that the Alliance, on its merits, should not be renewed. It is on its merits that the Alliance is a failure, and this is why it should be abandoned—not because of American pressure.



## A STUDY IN STONE

BY FILSON YOUNG

## I.

WHEN the doings of mankind in the world become so distasteful and puzzling that the study of them is a grief, it is a good thing to turn for relief to a study of some of the noble things that man has made and done; thus may we restore our belief in his dignity and high destiny. Whoso thus desires serene and strengthening influences, and is capable of receiving them from inanimate things, might do worse than take the road westward from London to some cathedral city in ancient England. For example, to Wells in Somerset, and there for a day or two spend as many hours as possible amid the lovely things within or clustering around its cathedral.

Great works of art and of man's hands lie in a region beyond our transitory affairs; they abide in a serenity of their own; they have it to impart, although no one can take it away from them. Each in its quite distinctive way, Wells Cathedral and the Escorial in Spain breathe this detachment and serenity. Different in all else, they are alike in that, and in the fact that they represent the thoughts of those who designed them on the life that shall follow this life. Wells is full of hope and faith—the golden faith of children who know nothing but heaven; the Escorial has the grim belief of mature man who has learned about hell. I know nothing in stone that comes so close to music as Wells does in its expression of joy in lovely things. Jocelyn's west front is indeed conceived almost like an orchestral score. The noble statuary of the three lower tiers is like a deep and fundamental tonality from which spring the modulating harmonies of the two middle tiers; and the smaller Resurrection tier and the Angels tier are the flowing melodies and the counterpoint which are their complement and adornment. The west front may merely be a screen for statuary and not a true West Front at all. It is the kind of point that architects like to discuss. But when you have steeped yourself in the more purely architectural glories of the Chapter House, with its staircase that is like a rushing waterfall; of the Bishop's Palace with its Plantagenet charm and lush surroundings of sward and water; of the Cloister, the Chain Gate, and the incomparable cluster of mediæval buildings that adorn the precincts, you will come back, I think, for mere human joy and delight to a prolonged contemplation of the west front. And sitting or leaning on the low stone wall of the green, and interrupted only by the activities of the two little men in armour on the north transept gable who keep time with Jack Blandiver within, and strike the bells with their battleaxes every quarter of an hour, as they have struck them in rain and shine, in the darkness of windy winter nights and in the hot sunshine of still summer days, for the last six centuries, you will surely be in a very bad way if something of the happiness and serenity of that beautiful composition is not imparted to your spirit.

Above all, the Resurrection tier may surely have a special meaning for the kind of visitor I am imagining. I do not mean necessarily a literal meaning. Those naked stone figures heaving up the lids of their tombs, or casting off their mortcloths, were conceived in a kind of faith which does not flourish in the modern world. But no one can regard them without being aware of a significance both higher and more profound than can possibly be expressed to-day in any material. Some figures have a startled air, some are dreamy, as though only half awaked from sleep; some are eager, as if they were already beginning to soar; but the whole combines in an expression of unearthly, almost intolerable joy. Only a consummate art and inspiration could crowd such emotion into these small stone canopies nearly 100 feet above

the eye. The "happy birds that sing and fly" about that place seem to make this tier their own; and though they may swoop down to drink out of the hollowed stone mitre of a Bishop, or rest upon the knees of a Saint, it is about this amazing company of babies breaking from tombs, of men and women, saints and sinners, still only half free of their sepulchres and yet stretching their limbs in the first stirrings of a renewed life, that the winged inhabitants love most to settle and sing. The joy of it all is irresistible—a symbol, at the very least, of the eternity and continuity of things that we have known as lovely and good.

## II.

Turn now to the Escorial—southward from Wells in space, but, compared to it, in an arctic North of the emotions. Madrid, that arid village capital, is a town of the South; but you leave the South behind you when you cross the Manzanares and face the tawny desert of Castile. The road flies under your wheels, Madrid becomes a silhouette of roofs and pinnacles against the sky, and the rocky plain of New Castile receives you like a rough grey sea with waves of stone, and solitary church spires instead of ships in the offing. Before you, to the north, lies the snowy precipitous coast of the Guadaramma range; and as the road, rising and falling, climbs ever higher, you savour the cold sweetness of mountain air. Somewhere about 20 miles from Madrid comes your first sight of a brown smudge on the slope of the mountains—the village of Escorial; and drawing nearer you see rising out of it the drab façade, regular as a barrack wall, with which the Royal Convent and Palace of Saint Lawrence fronts the desert of Spain. As you approach it grows larger and larger, like something meeting you in a dream; but it is not until you have spent hours and even days in exploring courts and chambers like the cells of a honeycomb in their order and multitude, that a true sense of its dignity and significance is born in you.

When Philip II. built the Escorial he intended it to express all that can be comprised in a divinely-appointed kingship. And indeed it is the most Royal thing in Spain. Within its vast parallelogram are contained a convent, a college, a Royal palace, and a church comparable in majestic nobility to St. Paul's Cathedral, beneath whose high altar is the mausoleum or pantheon where the kings and queens of Spain, after their brief day, sleep through the long night of death. The Escorial still contains, in spite of many depredations, treasures of every kind: treasures of painting, of fabric, of sculpture, of books and illuminated manuscripts, of which there is not even a catalogue in existence. But the Escorial itself is more wonderful than anything it contains or represents; and the better you know it the more it haunts you with its sphinx-like inscrutability. It seems too great and austere to be made for man; and the average visitor, anxious to be impressed, is too often chilled and confounded by its stony magnificence. The little town that has grown up round it tries to be gay, and with fountains and trees and gardens to meet the needs of average human nature. It is of no use: the vast pile seems to send forth sentence upon all joy or amusement—a petrified prayer or a curse, according as you see it under sunny or snowy skies. No movement can animate it; and the priests of the seminary and the boys playing under the shadow of its walls slip in and out like mice at the foot of a hayrick. It wears a different aspect in summer, of course, when the sierra is scorched with heat; but itself changes not from season to season, although I think that a winter day best suits its genius, with the snow behind it and the sunshine in front lighting one of the noblest, although most savage, landscapes in the world; or a winter night, when the air is strict with frost, and the solemn, immense rectangle blots

out part of a heaven white with stars, and yet is whiter even than they.

There is an infinite source of calm and serenity in an accomplished work like this. If small things fretted you, the very memory of the Kings of Judah—those six colossal figures each carved out of a single block of stone that surmount the west entrance to the church—should surely be a physic for your troubles. Up there among the lines, hard and straight against the blue sky, of pediment and pillar and architrave, they seem to be singing in solemn chorus the beauty not only of sculptured stone, but of things even more enduring than the stone that records them. If you are cast down by imperfection and failure, the marble Christ of Benvenuto Cellini is there to remind you that perfection is attainable by man. And if, in your frailty, you weary of grandeur and nobility, there is the Garden of the Evangelists for you to walk in—a little garden, aromatic with the box out of which it is wrought, and furnished with Monegro's lovely fountains and statues. Even in January, the wonder of this mountain climate is apparent. In the shade of a buttress, searched by a shrivelling wind, you are in mid-winter; but with a step into the sunshine and shelter you walk into the fragrance and warmth of eternal spring.

The bleakness and bareness of the Escorial have been called some very hard names, and Ford, who hated it, has set a fashion almost of deriding it. Nothing could be more unjust. Dreary it may be, but it is dreariness on a grand scale, as the Pagan conceptions of death and time are dreary. It truly expresses the sombre and fanatical spirit of its founder, who, whatever his faults, was no palterer among little things. Inspired by a spiritual impulse too frigid to be called an emotion, it is purely Pagan in its message. No greater architectural contrast could be found than that of the Escorial with the west front of Wells Cathedral. Both are monuments to a faith in eternity; but what an eternity is this which stares in ashen rigidity across the sea of Time, seeing and hoping for nothing, compared with that joyful sculpture of the resurrection at Wells, where the dead seem to be bursting open their tombs in a rapture of life, to greet the spring and the eternal morning!

But there stands the Escorial, complete and sufficient in itself, looking, after three and a half centuries, as though it had been built yesterday, and the last mason might still be met in the *plaza* blowing on hands still chilly from the cold steel; and will so stand, I suppose, for thousands of years, a thing almost entirely useless (because we do not know how to use it), and yet perfectly grand—a monument to many things that in their due time and order will be forgotten, and to other things that need no monument while thought endures—the whistling flight of time into eternity, the leaf-like passing of the generations, and man's enduring passion to give expression to the best he knows and to build a temple for what he worships.

#### SCANDAL ABOUT THE DEAD

By JAMES AGATE

TO the dramatist the chief danger of the historical play lies in the undermining of invention. This is, perhaps, the dramatist's affair, and I shall content myself with a note of warning. The danger to the spectator lies in the violence to known character and the descent to anecdote. Worst peril of all, in the theatre, is the risk of boredom. The historical play must necessarily labour an issue already known to the spectator or contradict that knowledge. Both processes are dull, the fabrication often the duller of the two. It may be laid down that the only historical plays of value are those in which the history does not count. I must leave it to Miss Clemence Dane to decide whether it was worth while

to descend from high and urgent present-day inventions to pretty fibbing about a great Englishman long since dead. She need offer no apology for violence done to Shakespeare. He was in no way concerned in the play of that name at the Shaftesbury Theatre. Nor was Byron deeply involved in 'The Pilgrim of Eternity,' Mr. K. K. Ardaschir's detective story at the Duke of York's. Both authors owe me, the spectator, an apology. Both plays raked for anecdote among dead men's bones. The one "invented," the other pretended to truth. Both were immitigably dull. The authors took their characters ready-made and measured them for suits of incident. Essentially, these plays were reach-me-downs. Whereas the historical dramatist, properly so-called, takes incident from its shelf and with it clothes the imagination. So Shakespeare re-creates Henry V., so Mr. Shaw *Cæsar*. These plays are good because their authors, having taken the measure of their men, stand up to them intellectually. Men of thought, they are of the stature of their men of action. We are not conscious of little minds babbling about the big ones; we do not feel discrepancy. Miss Dane purposed to suggest "the nature of the experiences which went to the development of Shakespeare's genius," and with this end hung a pot-house story on the great name. But to develop genius on the stage you must first of all exhibit it; it is not enough to write, even exquisitely, round it. Alas that the only genius to which she gave scope was that of Mr. Clarkson! Shakespeare's famous dome was the best of wiggery.

It is to be maintained that character and not incident is the proper business of the playwright, although Lessing appears to have held the contrary view. "The dramatist should refrain from using historical names, and rather credit totally unknown personages with well-known facts than invent characters to well-known personages. The one mode enlarges our knowledge, or seems to enlarge it, and is thus agreeable; the other contradicts the knowledge that we already possess, and is thus unpleasant." In other words, it is permissible to put the siege of Troy upon the stage so long as you do not mention Agamemnon. *Æschylus*, we may imagine, would have dissented with some vigour. The contradiction is probably more apparent than real. What Lessing probably meant is that the dramatist should avoid inventing attributes to personages whose characters are well-known to us in the minutest particular. He should avoid such heroes as Napoleon, William Hohenzollern, Abraham Lincoln. (You knew, reader, that *he* could not long be left out of it). I agree that anecdotes in the guise of plays are indefensible. Idealized, great figures make the best of pegs for principles, even for bad principles. So Shakespeare uses Henry for Valour, so Mr. Shaw makes *Cæsar* a symbol of Expedience or Greatness after the manner of Jonathan Wild, so Lincoln stands for . . . I need not labour what. I imagine that if Goethe had woven his philosophy round Shakespeare instead of Faust, Lessing would have been satisfied. But then Goethe would have tackled the poet spiritually. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. That which, in great men, belongs to the ages is the spiritual body. To enquire after the physical peculiarities is more than a violation; it is beside the point. That which concerns us in Shakespeare is not the colour of his hair but of his verse, not the quality of his mistresses but of his thoughts. I do not easily distinguish between the old essayist's desire "to behold bodily those authors in whom there is something curious apart from their writings," and that unholy curiosity which prompted the watcher by the body of Byron to uncover the lame foot.

I should not think 'Will Shakespeare' a good play even if Miss Dane could prove that its hero was deceived by Anne Hathaway as Jude was deceived by Arabella, that he was enamoured of Mary Fitton and



slew Marlowe. I should not think it a better play if she had made him a faithful husband and his friend's shield. These things do not matter. My complaint is that her Shakespeare shows no intellectual greatness. He, and indeed all the characters, talk poetically enough. There are pretty phrases about "pinched violets and the wrack of spring" (Cf. *Perdita*). To die is to be "winter-nipped like flies" ("Winter's ragged hand"). Sometimes we find him anti-Shakespearean. When he embraces Mary he talks about "Holding each other in a little room Like two souls within one grave." This is Shakespeare *à rebours*. His lovers do not, in their heyday, talk of graves; it is the grave which prates of passion. The abhorred monster has his paramour. And when, at the end, the poet envisages his glories to come, he is content with a royal gesture—he orders Elizabeth out of the room. But there is nothing royal in his mind, no hint of

I will do such things—  
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be  
The terrors of the earth.

At this point Miss Dane's imagination utterly deserted her. Elizabeth, on the other hand, is conceived with dignity; her tirade is poetry in the high, heroic vein. We think of this Queen in terms of England and not of Mr. Chamberlin's or anybody else's monograph. Miss Haidee Wright, whose intentions were manifest and admirable, was physically too slight for the part and her voice insufficiently strong. She sought to replace spacious majesty with something taut and vibrant, and perhaps it would be better if the Queen did not leave her throne. The part needed that magnificent sweep of the stage which Miss Geneviève Ward would have given, rather than Miss Wright's Dresden-china quality. No actor should be asked to impersonate Shakespeare.

Mr. Ardaschir did at least try to convey something of the spirit of his poet. "The lame lion limps on to liberty" bespeaks the *poseur*, but such indeed was Byron. The fact that I do not happen to care for Byron's poetry does not make me any more lenient towards a travesty of the poet. He is involved in this play in an imbroglio with the Italian C.I.D., worthy of the novels of Mr. Guy Boothby. What should we think if that distinguished foreigner, Signor D'Annunzio, were to invade our shores on behalf of Sinn Féin, stump Hyde Park, hold up the Bishop of London, and debauch our daughters? Yet that is exactly what this Byron does. Mr. Cowley Wright bears himself well and uses his fine voice finely, and Miss Yvonne Arnaud's Countess Guiccioli is an example of the *ewig weibliche* after Goethe's own heart. But the chief triumph of the evening again belonged to that artist whom Sarah Bernhardt has addressed as "Cher Maître." Mr. Clarkson and some good scenery away, both productions would have been, in the theatre, deserts of unrelieved dullness.

#### STRAUSS AFTER TEN YEARS

BY FRANCIS TOYE

'EIN HELDENLEBEN,' certainly the most ambitious and perhaps the most successful of Richard Strauss's tone-poems, has been played three times in London in the space of about a month. Last Saturday Sir Henry Wood and his admirably drilled orchestra gave by far the best performance of it. Nearly ten years, I think, have run since we last heard 'Ein Heldenleben,' so that Strauss's music comes about as a novelty to many people. In any case a flood of water has passed under the musical bridge during that time. Discords that shocked our ears a decade ago have become commonplaces; orchestral effects that were then revolutionary are now a matter of course. Strauss, essentially a romantic, is become outmoded in

the eyes of the advance guard of French and English *dilettanti*, who would banish romantic emotion from music. His stage thunder has been stolen and perfected by Stravinski. In short the *succès de scandale* that he undoubtedly enjoyed, has fizzled out. What remains? According to most of the critics—nothing, except a grudgingly admitted talent for realism. I do not agree.

As a matter of fact 'Ein Heldenleben' is not strictly speaking realistic music at all. People talk of the 'Antagonists' themes and the 'Battle' section as realistic, but they are not. They are, in the one case, satirical and snarling; in the other, purposefully harsh and discordant. But the conception is intellectual, not realistic. The hero's view of his enemies is translated into music in the same manner as is his contest with them. In fact we are asked to take for granted an association of literary ideas. The whole unity of the tone-poem rests on an intellectual basis. Themes are stated, blended and modified to express certain concepts. Unless the audience knows not only the meanings of the themes beforehand, but the procedure adopted in their treatment, these concepts remain unintelligible. The commentators have doubtless read into the score far more than the composer intended. Strauss is after all a musician, and no musician ever forgets that music is intended primarily to be heard. Now many of the themes when in a subsidiary position cannot be heard at all. It is difficult to identify them even if the music be followed with a score. But the general sense is clear enough. Once the principal themes are firmly fixed in the memory and the meanings of the six sections into which the work is divided have been understood, any listener can follow the emotional intentions of the composer.

For these intentions are primarily emotional, highly romantic even, albeit presented through the medium of an essentially intellectual technique. It is interesting, for instance, to compare Strauss's use of the pedal point with that of the Russian composers. Strauss, like most Germans, uses the pedal to work up a great emotional climax. In the process of working up he uses themes and fragments of themes that may or may not have an intellectual significance, but his main purpose remains clearly emotional. The Russians use the pedal for purely rhythmical purposes, taking one figure and working it to the *n*th degree through a succession of harmonies. The difference is very striking after our long separation—I will not write divorce—from modern German music. Perhaps owing to this enforced abstinence the German method comes as a distinct relief.

For myself I must admit that 'Heldenleben' as a whole was very welcome. German composers strike me as being able to "get inside" their music better than others. I do not profess to explain this. It is merely a personal feeling that may or may not be shared by other people. Strauss, for instance, has a perfect mastery of his medium. His form is admirable. His sense of discipline and of contrast is obvious. The same might be said of at least one English, two French, and, less certainly, one Russian composer. But somehow Strauss seems to "get there" more certainly than they do. I suppose it is the effect of a great tradition, of the unseen spirit of Beethoven, Mozart and Bach. For 'Heldenleben' is by no means a perfect work. The thematic material, though admirably adapted to the jigsaw-puzzle kind of treatment that makes the score appear so marvellous to the eye, is very poor and undistinguished. When the horns, in the last section but one, shout the wonderful 'Don Juan' theme, it cuts like a razor after the blunt edges of the 'Hero' motives. And the sentimental themes are even worse. There is scarcely a greater bore in music than 'The Hero's Helpmate.' Both Elgar and Vaughan-Williams have written far better subjects. The mystery remains why the tone-poem as a whole is so satisfactory.

## AN INSCRIPTION

By D. S. MACCOLL

WHEN I referred the other day to the epitaph of the "Unknown Warrior" in Westminster Abbey I was not aware that a new stone and inscription had been prepared. I propose to consider both forms.

The superseded version, in "block" letter ran:

A BRITISH WARRIOR  
WHO FELL  
IN THE GREAT WAR  
1914-1918

FOR KING  
AND COUNTRY

An, un, nown of "An Unknown British Warrior" in a still earlier version, was thus avoided, but "Unknown" was omitted, and that has become the very keyword in the celebration. The scale of the formula "For King and Country" was wrong, being larger than the leading words; and the arabic numerals were both mean of their kind and not the kind for monuments. But worse than those defects in form were defects in wording. "British" will not do; it is a sorry compromise for the noble and right word "English," adopted to meet the susceptibilities of silly people among my countrymen; if Mr. de Valera has his way, not even "British" will suffice. Nor will "Warrior" do. It is another compromise, because seamen and airmen would have been discontented with the natural word "soldier," to stand for fighter or combatant. But if these are too untechnical, "Warrior" is too literary, and the conjunction "British Warrior" carries the mind inevitably to "British Warrior Queen," which is all right for the Icenian, Catieuchlanian, Coritanian, Trinobant, but not for Thomas Atkins. Moreover, "Warrior" jingled with "War" in the following phrase. "For King and Country" is a fine old service formula, but not wide enough for this War.

If the earlier inscription was faulty in all these respects, it had a negative merit; it was plain and laconic, not florid or verbose, and such a plainness and brevity sorted well with the taciturnity and impersonality of the celebration. The Abbey has all variety of inscriptions, from the most copious to the most laconic; of the laconic notable examples are *O rare Ben Jonson* and *Jane Lister, Dear Childe*. But such flowerings in a lonely word are not to be commanded; they spring from a sudden genius of affection.

The new inscription—which is here reproduced—is not laconic; it includes additional matter, some part at least of which had a good claim for record. The lettering and the disposition are not bad, but rather dull and crowded, and predominance of size is given to the words "For God," which belong to a subordinate statement. "His Majesty King George V.," as chief mourner, distracts the eye by equality with "Of a British Warrior," itself defaced by a preposition taken from an unnecessary phrase.

In addition to these vices of form the inscription has nearly all others that are possible. The English language, it is fair to remember, has many traps for the epigraphist. Its particles, its articles, prepositions and pronouns in lieu of inflections, contrast with the mass and concision that Latin offers for the lapidary style; nor can English shift its words with the same freedom from first place to last, and effect those *sforzandos* which are like the rumble of a muffled drum. Yet there are degrees, and this inscription is verbose without being sonorous: it is cacophonous, it is pleonastic; in part it touches the journalistic, in part it drops from prose into a jog-trot of verse. Awkward liaisons cannot always be avoided, but for cacophony, consider the first line: "Beneath this

stone rests", for tautology and cacophony mixed the "many multitudes" with the excessive alliteration of its "m's" following upon "commemorated." The enumeration of those present belonged rather to

X X SH ENY LTHA NEMH HEMONK DROT EHL X X  
X GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS X  
BENEATH THIS STONE RESTS THE BODY  
OF A BRITISH WARRIOR  
UNKNOWN BY NAME OR RANK  
BROUGHT FROM FRANCE TO LIE AMONG  
THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS OF THE LAND  
AND BURIED HERE ON ARMISTICE DAY  
11 NOV: 1920. IN THE PRESENCE OF  
HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE V  
HIS MINISTERS OF STATE  
THE CHIEFS OF HIS FORCES  
AND A VAST CONCOURSE OF THE NATION  
THUS ARE COMMEMORATED THE MANY  
MULTITUDES WHO DURING THE GREAT  
WAR OF 1914-1918 GAVE THE MOST THAT  
MAN CAN GIVE LIFE ITSELF  
FOR GOD  
FOR KING AND COUNTRY  
FOR LOVED ONES HOME AND EMPIRE  
FOR THE SACRED CAUSE OF JUSTICE AND  
THE FREEDOM OF THE WORLD  
THEY BURIED HIM AMONG THE KINGS BECAUSE HE  
HAD DONE GOOD TOWARD GOD AND TOWARD  
HIS HOUSE  
X X IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE X X

next day's newspaper, than to the slab; the mourners were the people of the English race—

For God, for King and Country,  
For loved ones, home and Empire,

For the sacred cause of Justice and the freedom of the world are three verses, and a fourth is divided from them by the insertion of the superfluous gloss "life itself." As for the content of those verses, "God" is out of place, because that word sums up all noble motives, and if used should be used alone: but what we want here is a definition of the proximate aims of the fighters, not of an ultimate sanction which might have been denied by many of the brave men who fought. "For loved ones, home and Empire" is like a parody of "England, home and beauty," and in its concatenation calls to mind "L'hôtel de Portugal et de l'Univers." "Empire" is new-fangled; "sacred cause of" needless; "freedom of the world" bigger even than the aims of this biggest of wars.

Now it is obvious that no one man, however clumsy, could have brought together so many faults in so short a compass; this must have been a joint composition; no theory save multiple-authorship will account for such discrepancy between the brains available and the result.

Having criticised, I may be thought bound to supply an alternative. I will not pretend to do that, but it may be possible to illustrate how some of the obstacles might be turned. Let it be supposed that all the matter of the above inscription is to be included, and one other relevant fact, the foreign soil in which the nameless body was laid, contrasting with "sands . . . dropt from the ruined sides of Kings." Then we must detach, for the eye, from the total inscription, one more laconic. "British" and "warrior" will not do: we must get along, therefore,



without a noun. Further still, though home and loved ones may have been in the foreground for individuals, the causes of the War were two: first, the immemorial ranging of the nation against any tyranny that threatens Europe; the other threat was to our own preservation. The exposition of motives must cover these two heads. We shall therefore have something like this, pivoting on the solitary adjective "Unknown."

HERE  
MIXED WITH THE DUST OF KINGS  
AND OF FAMOUS MEN  
IN EARTH BROUGHT WITH HIM  
FROM THE BATTLEFIELDS OF FRANCE  
LIES  
UNKNOWN  
WHETHER OF THE SEA LAND OR AIR  
FORCES OF THE CROWN  
ONE  
WHO FELL  
IN  
THE GREAT WAR  
MDCCCXIV—MDCCCXVIII  
FOR  
THE LIBERTIES OF EUROPE  
AND THE SECURITY OF THIS REALM

If mourners are to be mentioned they should follow after a space; for motto I suggest: "This is my body broken for you." It sums up the associations of sacrifice and communion that have gathered about the celebration, rendering it a mystic rite; not life only lost, but identity, so that one who may have been the humblest or most heroic, the most timorous or most fearless of the fighters, has become No-man or Every-man, "in the ecstasy of being ever."

I think "Here" ought to be enough, without the phrases that follow, to point the entrance of the Unknown among "the famous nations of the dead," to sleep with princes and counsellors in the royal acre; but there is room for debate between shorter and ampler. Surely there is someone among us who could chisel the perfect form. The present inscription mars a finely imagined and singularly moving act.

#### THE HIGH-STEPPER

By JEHU

HE still lingers, dragging in his wake the derelict dowagers of these decadent days. He is become the mockery of the Park. Yet there was a time when the passion for "something to drive" was general. It was one of the gentlest and least harmful of hobby-horses that ever lifted leg. It was ever mine. "That which excites so lively and lasting an interest in itself, even though it should not be wisdom, is not despicable in the sight of reason and humanity." But I will not be at pains to defend my passion. As the old playwright said: "By God, 'tis good; and if you like't, you may!"

I am no racing man. I would give all your layers and takers for that old Yorkshire farmer who, on his death-bed, raised his head for the last time at the sound of Ophelia, the great Hackney mare, walking one-two-three-four down the village street. "A horse," say you, being a poet, "is only a horse." But to a horseman a poet is only a poet. Your horseman would give nothing to have talked with Shelley: I would give half I possess to have seen Ophelia plain. "He who has done a single thing that others never forget, and feel ennobled whenever they think of, need not regret his having been, and may throw aside this fleshly coil, like any other worn-out part, grateful and contented." So Stevenson. Why, then, should not the horseman die content who has bred an immortal mare?

It may be nothing to you how the great Ophelia was bred, who, as they say, she was by. But will you swear that you always know whom the novels you read are by? I know nothing more pitifully foolish than the pictures in the illustrated papers of our aris-

tocracy on horseback. 'The Duchess of Euston at the Willesden Meet,' with all that matters—the front and quarters of her mount—cut off before and behind the saddle. Who cares whether her Grace is deep through the heart, well ribbed-up and stands on short legs, is quiet in all traffic, sound in wind and limb, no day too long? Her quality is taken for granted; in all fairness let the horse speak for himself.

What a piece of work is a horse! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a man! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals! Never was there a more erroneous conception than that the good fellow, the horse, occasions the worst in man. Rather does he bring out all that doing and daring, the willingness to take risks, to speculate and to deal, which an eminent store-keeper has declared to be man's vocation on earth. The Englishman, this shop-man complains, is too apt to throw over in favour of his games that pursuit of business which is the greatest game of all. But here he forgets the horse-dealer, with whom trade is the ruling passion, not only of a death-bed, but of a lifetime. The horse-dealer does not breathe who lacks the fervour of the disciple, the obstinacy of the fanatic, the ecstasy of the martyr. His soul is a fire that dieth not. For him the Persian invented the motto "The Buyer hath Need of a Thousand Eyes, the Seller but One." They were money-changers and not swoppers of horses who on that Jewish morning submitted to the upsetting of their tables. "I've been had many a time, and I've had a few in my time, but when it's all reckoned up I've had the best end of the deal," is a form of repentance which likes me.

Selling horses calls for the art which in many a powerful column has been claimed for the selling of boots. The style may be the style of Callisthenes but the voice is the voice of Selfridge. Now the selling of boots, suit-cases, and motor-cars calls not for art but for the diplomacy of the counter. The things are dead matter turned out at so much a thousand. The only factory in which the horse is turned out is God's. Your super-storeman will say: "Granted that boots and suit-cases and motor-cars are machine-made and liker than peas in a pod, the art of salesmanship consists in getting the consumer to consume at my establishment." By which he means that his salesmen are pleasanter and better-mannered, the knife-edge in their trousers more sharply defined, their hair and nails more highly polished, than at the establishment down the street. We must make an emendation. God created man in His image that he might stand behind a counter. The standard by which a motor-car is appraised is a mathematical one.

Power of Cylinders

× Durability = Price

Petrol Consumption

Not even the dapper little gentlemen who foist these soulless things upon you will dissent from such a proposition. But the horseman does not exist who will estimate his horse in terms of

Haulage capacity

× Length of days = Value

Cost of Keep

One car is as good as another if it will do the same thing for the same length of time at the same cost. The test for beauty is the same as in the case of the big gun, the aeroplane, or any other engine for the destruction of man—the test of efficiency. Whereas the horse will answer, thank God, to every other test under heaven. Who that owns a car can spend an evening with it in its stable without butchery, and a whole ritual of evisceration reminiscent of fourteenth-century *Messes Noires*? You cannot commune with ironmongery without taking it to pieces. Whereas you can talk to your nag in kindness, and even gather something of his replies. "He who has seen tree-tops bend before the wind or a horse move, knows all that there is to be known of the art of dancing," says an old writer upon

æsthetics. The gleanings of him who has spent hours by the road-side with a broken axle do not go beyond immobility. But the whole case for beauty in the car is given away by its proper advocates. What panegyrist of mechanical traction is there who, after a picture of the road gleaming white in the moonlight, will refrain from saying that the driver "opened out her throttle and felt the car bound beneath him *like a live thing*"? Whereas the horse is a live thing. . .

The value of a motor-car may be determined by a computation of the cost of production plus the margin of profit current in the trade. Roughly it is worth a thousand pounds or it is not. If it be worth a thousand pounds you will get that sum for it, and I, who know less about a car than Mr. Harry Tate's assistant, will, after a visit to a shop assistant's tailor and three weeks' tuition in the art of "approaching" customers, sell as many as the next fellow. You can sell a car on paper, by specification, before it is made. Twenty thousand young sprigs there are who, were they driven to earn their own living, would take to selling Rolls-Royces as easily as Jews to money-lending. They have only to stare through the shop windows of Bond Street from the other side. But give them a poor horse, worth a thousand when he is fit, and ask them to get that sum for him! For the value of a horse is not determined by the supply and demand ruling in the trade, so much as by what you can persuade the customer to think of him as an individual. This is the selling which is an art.

We may be sure that in Heaven the clatter of four hoofs is a more welcome sound than the roar of a thousand cylinders.

## Correspondence

### A REWARD TO IDEALISM

(FROM OUR FRENCH CORRESPONDENT)

**M** ANATOLE FRANCE has just been awarded the Nobel prize and the cheque may already have been cashed at his bank.

What do people get the Nobel prize for? For their idealism, and it certainly is a noble idea to reward people for their idealism. But we should not be in too great a hurry to imagine that the Nobel prize is given to people who live an ideal life, or live up to an ideal, or generally seem to embody an ideal of some kind. This is what the modest language of the past used to call a good life; and a much humbler premium than the Nobel prize is given to that kind of excellence. Strange to say, it is a French prize, called the Prix Monthyon, and for a hundred and fifty years it has been the reward of servants who stick to their masters when they have lost their money, of eldest sisters—they are never brothers—who take care of eight or nine born after them, of queer old nuns who coax or frighten money out of rich people and keep up an orphanage, sometimes, I am glad to say, of some heroic cat lover.

Nobody ever thought of awarding a Prix Monthyon to M. Anatole France. He did indeed do two rather daring things in his life. He insisted on enlisting in 1915, at the age of seventy-one, and in 1920, at the age of seventy-six, he took to an even more reckless course by marrying some lady. But in the first instance he knew that he would not go far beyond his military novitiate and stood a better chance of being given a little wooden gun at Christmas than of being sent to face machine guns at the front; and in the second instance he must have had novitiate enough to realise that the novelty of being married could not last very long.

Of course he is a Socialist whom long-haired Syndicalists call *le camarade Anatole* to the wonder of real union men in the pit, and recently he has even been converted to Communism by M. Rappoport; every now and then he is reported to have addressed an audience on behalf of some Soviet organization, and my imagination shows him to me as I saw him almost twenty

years ago on a platform of that kind. M. Anatole France is a delightful writer, and if one is patient enough not to judge him in the first quarter of an hour he is a brilliant conversationalist, and might even be a good one had he not to talk up to a reputation. But *le camarade Anatole* with no voice, no memory, and no pluck, with his chief asset—his sixteenth century face—hidden behind his manuscript, is not an impressive orator. The moment he has to use the language of to-day to discuss questions of to-day he is apt to become a little ordinary, with short flashes of violence in no way recalling his exquisite satire, and he looks unpleasantly like an actor with the make-up almost gone.

No, no, M. Anatole France is at his best and most natural in his perfect museum of a house in the Champs Elysées or in his country place of Bèchellerie near the Loire; and his idealism does not consist in setting rich people the example of an austere life but in showing poor ignorant people the kind of refined artistic life he hopes will be theirs when Socialism changes the whole world into Champs Elysées.

I have no doubt but the Swedish Academy in whose gift the Nobel prize is, thinks very much in the same way. Those Scandinavians have a decided taste for brilliance, wit and a light touch, and I am ready to bet that Mr. Shaw will get the Nobel prize long before Mr. Wells. What attracts them is not idealism in its purest form, viz., naked truth or lean self-sacrifice, it is idealism dressed up for Academicians, and what they love in M. Anatole France is his rare talent for charming symbols. Like all moderns they would rather go for advice to an amusing person, and they regard Dumas, Ibsen, or Bourget as quite as good moralists as Jeremy Taylor.

In consequence, and if we want to enter into the spirit of the Swedish Academy, we must ask ourselves how much idealism latent in M. Anatole France's novels is worth four thousand pounds.

No occupation is more charming than browsing among those twenty to twenty-five volumes: wit and sensibility peer on every page from between great masses of erudition. But idealism? Here are the Bergeret books, with a background of Dreyfusist conviction which undoubtedly was something like idealism, but also a vast deal of chaffing at the expense of the army which the septuagenarian recruit of 1915 must have regretted. Next stands 'Thais' and 'Le Lys Rouge': no idealism there, only truth of a certain kind which may not always be indispensable. The Jérôme Coignard books? Most elegant pyrrhonism seasoned with much the same stuff that fills 'Thais,' but how remote from Scandinavian earnestness! 'La Vie de Jeanne d'Arc,' 'L'Île des Pingouins'—knowledge, wit, style, but who can help remarking that the author was severely rebuked by Andrew Lang for writing one book, and that it was unfortunate for the other to come out such a short time before the war? 'Le Livre de Mon Ami'? Exquisite, all the charm that permeated our earliest remembrances. 'Crainquebille'? Ah! here I find an admixture of wisdom and pity that surely is a form of idealism; but how many Crainquebilles are there in M. France's works?

Compared to Dickens, compared even to Voltaire, how self-centred Anatole France seems, how entirely literary! A great artist as much as you like, but a very occasional, or a very reticent idealist. No apostle, no missionary, only a perfect dilettante, a man who always took more pleasure in the way things were expressed than in the things themselves. And here a picturesque criticism of Anatole France by his friend Rodin inevitably recurs to our memory. Anatole, said the stocky robust sculptor—no doubt remembering the days when a dish of stewed rabbit was his Sunday treat—*Anatole a la sauce, mais il n'a pas le lapin.*

Nothing truer was ever said, or in simpler language: the chief merit of Anatole France lies in immense knowledge coupled with exquisite handling. No real genius there, nor any great warmth of heart either.



My private belief is that the Swedish Academy has at the same time rewarded a great French writer and tried to put the clock of the French nation back to where the hands stood before the war, when French scepticism, French charm and French unseriousness were a joy as well as a scandal to graver nations. But clocks of that kind do not go back, they only go round, and it will take some time before the revolution is completed.

## Verse

### THE GALE

LAST night the heavens were blown about,  
 Stars were guttering in the height,  
 The moon collapsed, and was harried out,  
 And an old owl, debarred from flight,  
 Would have shrieked had the wind not been so cold,  
 Chilling her rage, stopping her breath,  
 Filling her tree-trunk nest with groans,  
 Churchyard rustlings, whispered death,  
 Or seawaves dragging seamen's bones,  
 Bones that would ache were they laid in graves.  
 The sheep were huddled up in the fold,  
 Tottering creatures, half asleep,  
 Swaying together, their cold wits muddled,  
 Wondering what the din is about  
 In the world without, where the autumn leaves  
 With blizzard touch fling past unseen,  
 Tapping at windows under the eaves,  
 While the wind creeps in and flutters the hair  
 Of the sleeping children. Ah! Will it dare . . . ?  
 They sigh, and snuggle their heads in their nightgown  
 sleeves.  
 The wind mutters under the quilt, and dies.  
 The night is so dark; nobody sees  
 The ruin, the flight of the summer green,  
 Leaving the stark and shivering trees  
 To loom in the starbright morning skies,  
 Bare!

RICHARD CHURCH

## Letters to the Editor

### A FALSE ANALOGY

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In his speech at the Liverpool Convention Mr. Austen Chamberlain expressed his deep regret at having voted against the grant of self-government to the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. In doing this he was very right. That grant was a most generous concession to a brave but defeated enemy; and, if that enemy was capable of appreciating generosity, was calculated as nothing else could be to win his friendship and gratitude. But Mr. Austen Chamberlain cited the success of that concession as a justification and a precedent for the Government's policy of granting the complete government of Ireland to the Sinn Feiners now. In doing this he was absolutely wrong.

In the first place, when self-government was granted to the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, these enemies had made complete submission to us. They had for eight years fought us bravely in the field; and had at last to admit defeat and surrender their arms. We had them completely in our power; and we used our power to grant them practically their old independence. It was a free gift: that was what made it so generous and awoke the friendship and gratitude of the nobler spirits among them. But we have not defeated the Sinn Feiners. On the contrary one of the grounds relied upon by supporters of the Government policy is that hundreds of millions of pounds and hundreds of thousands of men would be necessary to subdue them. The Sinn Feiners are not taking from us the government of Ireland as a free gift; they are demanding it as what they have

won. Why they should feel any gratitude or friendship for it under such circumstances is hard to see. The true precedent for such a settlement is not Campbell-Bannerman's Transvaal settlement after the Peace of Pretoria, but Gladstone's Transvaal settlement after the defeat of Majuba. Mr. Austen Chamberlain says he is sure if his father were living he would vote for the proposed Irish settlement. Very possibly: he voted for the Gladstone settlement. By a strange irony he was the minister who was later to direct the reconquest of the Transvaal: perhaps Mr. Austen Chamberlain may yet be the minister to direct the reconquest of Ireland.

There is another great difference. When Campbell-Bannerman granted self-government to the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, he did not try to deprive the people of Cape Colony and Natal of any of the privileges they then enjoyed. It was obviously desirable that all these colonies should have one supreme agreement for their common purposes; but the arrangement of this was left to themselves to settle. That was the proposal of the Government of Ireland Act which Ulster somewhat reluctantly accepted. The new proposal is that this should not be left to any future amicable arrangement between Northern and Southern Ireland, but be settled now. A supreme Irish Parliament is to be set up at once in which Southern Ireland shall—under the direction of the gunmen—elect a majority over Northern Ireland of something like three to one, and which shall control the customs excise and income tax; and Ulster is denounced by the Government's supporters as a "wrecker" because she does not see her way at present to accept this proposal. Not only so: she is called on to make a further sacrifice. She is as much as Middlesex or Midlothian part and parcel of the United Kingdom; and all sons of hers have been born with the right of being represented in and governed by the Imperial Government and no other authority. In the hope of placating the Sinn Feiners it is now proposed to deprive them of their birthright. I wonder what the men of Middlesex or Midlothian would say if such a proposal were put before them? Yet, because the Ulstermen refuse to be gently but firmly expelled from the United Kingdom, they are abused by every Government newspaper in it. I venture to affirm that no nation in history ever before made or agreed to a proposal to expel a million of its loyalist citizens except at the dictation of a victorious foe. It is not strange, therefore, if the Sinn Feiners regard themselves as victors dictating terms of peace to a humbled enemy.

Ulster denies the moral right of the rest of the United Kingdom to expel her from it. She admits its technical right to do so; but contends that, once it is expelled and Ulster ceases to be part of the United Kingdom, then the authority over her of the Parliament of the United Kingdom comes to an end. She is entitled then to say how she shall be governed, and she claims absolutely to govern herself—to be a dominion, that is, independent within the Empire; and if she joins forces with Southern Ireland to do so of her own free will and at her own time. As this will not satisfy the Sinn Feiners, the Government Press and politicians declare that if she insists on it, she will lose the sympathy of England. Under the circumstances she can contemplate that loss with equanimity. The sympathy which would drive her by persuasion, abuse, economic pressure, and ultimately—if we are to believe some of the supporters of the Government policy—by force out of the United Kingdom and under the rule of—let us hope—reformed rebels, is as hard to distinguish from treachery as is the settlement with the Sinn Feiners from capitulation.

Yours etc.,

J. A. STRAHAN

Athenæum Club, S.W.

## CEZANNE AND THE LONDON GROUP.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—English critics, since the big collision in 1912, have elected to divide into two camps: those who talk against those who like Cézanne and those who talk against those who do not like Cézanne. During that decade of superheated controversy this artist has remained almost unknown in our country. In Continental, American, Japanese and Russian collections, public and private, he is amply represented. In Great Britain there are about five minor examples, none in galleries open to the public, and in this vacuum the winds from both quarters contend unceasingly. To the dozens of essayists who do not know his work except through reproductions, he retains all the attractiveness of an ever fresh rumour and all the glamour of an unexploded myth. Some extravagant praise of a good artist is always tolerated by the wise, and it is less boring to put up with the "Nonsense about Cézanne" than with the "Nonsense about the Nonsense about Cézanne." Sane, broadminded students of art and life who unravel Einstein and collect Max's funny sketches, immediately talk silly at the mention of this man's name. If such powers were proof of greatness, Cézanne would be great indeed. But of course they are nothing of the kind.

Mr. MacColl obviously keeps in touch with modern art as a whole. Some of the expressions he has been using when writing of Cézanne, of any young Englishman whom Cézanne has influenced, and of laymen with a taste for his painting, are on that account the more important and the more to be wondered at.

In dealing with the subject in your columns, Mr. MacColl, true to his calling as critic, first queers the pitch by turning on his brethren. He scoffs at the credulity of Mr. Keynes, celebrated throughout five continents for his caution, then having lost his temper with Mr. Clive Bell and ridiculed Mr. Clutton Brock, he charges the worthy Mr. Fry with the obsolete sin of witchcraft, mocks at him for being as old as his tormentor, drags in his alleged religion in connection with drink and drugs and suggests that out of malice he has induced the members of the London Group to paint badly. Then the more talented of that meek body are attacked in language suited to the Klu-Klux-Klan and retortured, male and female, on the rack. Then suddenly the chastised children are all given a spoonful of treacle, with brimstone in it. "That the drugs and patent medicines are losing their vogue is a cheering symptom, and my advice to the investors in youth is to be patient and keep on backing them."

After a week's well merited rest, Mr. MacColl produces his cane once more. Poor Mr. Porter who no doubt had thought to escape by not exhibiting at the London Group is torn from his retreat at the Independent Gallery. At last Cézanne's turn comes. "It is high time we tackled him," says our author. We agreed. But turning again to his favourite subjects he inconsequentially continues "I have attempted it once (*sic*) before; but discussion with Mr. Fry and Mr. Bell is like talking to ———." Later he says, "Cézanne was involved in painting by methods which are properly those of sketching, and very imperfectly qualified for that desperate business." Before the living model, landscapes and flowers, Cézanne was "nervously impotent" and dismissed trees "with an angry shorthand gesture." The master is allowed "a taste" for broad fat patches of colour. "But over the shaping of those patches he had little control." He had, as well as all these defects, "as much difficulty with words as with drawing." Then comes the treacle compound again. Cézanne was good at painting apples and napkins, which, however, are monotonous; and "Cézanne will (*sic*) have his niche in the museums—and at Millbank, let us hope among the rest." Our attention is then drawn to the fact that Cézannes are now very expensive but in 1890 were sold for £16 each.

Why should Mr. MacColl recommend a great National Gallery to purchase at a formidable figure such contemptible painting? If Cézanne be really worthless, Mr. MacColl should thank Mr. Aitken for his good sense in refusing the works of the quack when recently offered free of charge by Miss Davies. If, on the other hand, Mr. MacColl cannot agree with Mr. Aitken, it is perhaps a pity that he and his Millbank colleagues did not listen to Mr. Fry and Mr. Bell many years ago, before the whole world outside these sleepy islands had grasped his significance and made him a rarity too costly for the British Treasury? Or have the Trustees been searching in vain since 1890 for cheap Cézannes depicting apples and napkins?

Yours etc.,

R. R. TATLOCK

19, Taviton Street, W.C.1.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Last Saturday my friend Mr. MacColl referred to a letter of mine addressed to you on the London Group and its aims. I in no way admit, as he avers, that they cannot draw; all I say is that their interest in form is emphasized in a particular direction. As to his remark that Einstein was anticipated by painters, if Mr. MacColl will refer to two articles in the July and August numbers of the *Burlington Magazine* he will find the subject dealt with there. Mr. MacColl, himself a good artist, artist-like has in another direction anticipated science, for is not his division of painters into Titans and Olympians but a graceful expression for the Extrovert and Introvert of the psycho-analysts?

But I must joint issue with him when he says that "painting by the limitations of its nature is of things seen, so we must ignore 'unconscious wishes' and deal with what we see." This does not go deep enough. The chief interest of painting lies in its *interpretation* of things seen, and interpretation connotes mental processes which have to be treated in a manner more philosophic than one of mere likes and dislikes. Art cannot be divorced from its environment or, really, even from polity; it is one branch of the flow of life and the trend of that flow at any given time governs all types of activity. The relationship of life to art is often obscure enough yet subsists, but the difficulty which confronts men of the generation to which Mr. MacColl and I belong is that of understanding and doing justice to the problems which face our juniors by a quarter of a century.

Any group of painters which shows sensibility towards life conditions is to my thinking of more hopeful promise if it dare revolt and dare experiment—as Mr. MacColl did in his day—than dutiful students who turn out work on approved pattern and take no risks. In the former category I place certain members of the London Group and a few others, but for the moment can perceive no signs of such enterprise elsewhere.

What Mr. MacColl, I think, in reality is up against, and in this he has my sympathy, is the somewhat child-like and tactless arrogance of certain members of the younger generation and above all of their supporters. But we have to remember that this is a defence mechanism which shows in reality a certain humility and want of confidence, and this also appears in the absence of gaiety in their work. Undoubtedly their work is sad and anxious. Nevertheless these are men to whom thought and consideration should be extended and it is a subject for regret that certain sections of the Press without careful study have attacked them with such bitterness.

Yours etc.,

ALFRED THORNTON

Painswick.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Years ago when I was in the nursery my nurse used to frighten me with tales of a bogeyman who had fallen asleep in Manchester Square.



When we were naughty nurse used to say "I will call Mr. MacColl, he is round the corner with a big stick." So we were very good and nothing happened.

But the workmen rehangng the pictures have made so much noise that the Bogy has turned in his sleep and muttered something about young men and Cézanne. Half awake he feels for his big stick, and before we can call nurse he taps us over the head.

Now we, who are in our twenties, are not naughty. We have not played with Cézanne, we only play with nice people like Crome, Hogarth and Gainsborough; and we will tell nurse when she comes back from Dieppe.

If my friend Mr. MacColl will go to the Slade and the New English Art Club, he will find that we are not guilty.

Yours etc.,

JOHN WHEATLEY

Chelsea.

#### IRELAND

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Reading your interesting pages for November 12 and 19, I see that three letters have been addressed to you, and published, in regard to my comments.

Taking those letters in order, I would say that the one from Mr. Stephen de Leigh (Nov. 12), while admirable in tone and temper, yet seems to me an evasion of plain issues: at least, so far as it deals with the effect of the Union on Irish depopulation. He originally argued that that depopulation, as it dates from 1846 rather than from 1800, resulted rather from Free Trade than from the Union. I replied that the fact that Free Trade could so act was due to the subjection of Irish economics to those of England, resulting from Westminster domination of both Exchequers; that the Union caused this; and therefore that the Union was the cause of the evils. Mr. de Leigh now says that I overlook the fact that he said "Free Trade in England" caused the displacement. What an evasion, to be sure! Of course, if the Irish had had their own Government and Exchequer, they could not have controlled affairs "in England." They could, however, have taken remedial measures in Ireland. The unanswerable fact (which Mr. de Leigh has not faced) is that the Union subjected the Irish economic system to a Parliament representing (as regards the great majority of its members) interests different from, and in many ways opposed to, Ireland's; and the result has been the semi-depopulation of Ireland. The fact that the early Victorian Irish M.P.'s voted for Free Trade is quite irrelevant. Had they had a Dublin Parliament they *might* have done so there also, as Mr. de Leigh truly remarks. That Parliament, however, would have been able to take other measures when it realised its error (as it very soon would have done). Subjection to Westminster, however, made the error absolutely irremediable. The Union had subjected Irish economics to England's; that subjection resulted in Ireland's being run largely on systems fit for England but not for Ireland, which largely caused Irish depopulation; *ergo*, the Union was a main cause of Irish depopulation. The argument seems to me not even merely *post hoc*, but strictly *propter hoc* and unanswerable. I may add I am not impressed by Mr. de Leigh's list of "benefits" of the Union. True, we passed Land Acts. Those Acts, however, to a great extent simply restored to the Irish lands of which they had been robbed by English absentee landlords. Even so, Mr. de Leigh admits that the money, by which the Irish acquire those lands, is a mere loan from England, to be repaid with interest. If I stole Mr. de Leigh's gold watch, and if I offered him (after I had made use of the watch for a long time, and when I had the fear of the police on my track) the money to buy it back from me if only he would agree to pay me the money back with interest,—what would he think of my effrontery if I claimed to deserve his "gratitude"? (I may add that no Land Act movement began in West-

minster except under pressure of political necessity). The broad facts remain: Irish economic and political subjection to England, resulting from the Union, has been disastrous for Ireland and has left a mountain of trouble for England.

As to the letter of "Sussex" (Nov. 19), few comments are needed. His comparison of Sinn Féin with "the South in the American Civil War" is faulty. I suggest that Sinn Féin is more comparable with Washington in the War of Independence; and that the parallel with the Civil War is more nearly found in the intransigent Unionists of N.E. Ulster. Sinn Féin offers N.E. Ulster generous local autonomy. The province is an integral part of Ireland as Ireland never has been of England. The intransigents are a minority even in their own province, and this fact is obscured only by depriving the province of three of its counties and ignoring the wishes of the majority in two others.

As to Mr. J. Banister (Nov. 19), I see he favours self-determination, though for different reasons from mine. I would, then, merely correct his reference to the Catholic religion as "alien." That religion was England's for nigh 1,000 years; it appeals to all nations, and owns itself alien to none. This, however, is a religious question: and we are discussing politics, not religion.

My "qualifications" to discuss Ireland arise from long and careful study and personal acquaintance.

Yours etc.,

J. W. POYNTER

Highbury, N.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I read with interest the letter signed J. W. Poynter in your issue of the 12th inst. But! and there are always buts, surely, if we are to govern only "with the consent and acquiescence of the governed"? Ulster was right to prepare for eventualities—for, as the richest and most industrial portion of the country, she knew full well what was in store for her under a Home Rule basis. I think the late Lord Randolph Churchill said something in this sense some years ago. Washington was no doubt a great man—so have been others who have resisted authority, but what would have been said of him had he failed? And it was at one time a near thing.

I cannot but think of an old piece of yellow paper I have, on which is written in faded writing a verse of the anthem as it was sung by the British officers in their captivity after York Town:

God grant that Clinton may  
On some auspicious day  
Victory bring—  
And like a Torrent rush  
The "Damned Rebellion" crush.  
God save the King.

There is not much doubt what they thought about it, and it seems to me the more "manly" view.

As to General Decies, does your correspondent really imagine that "warfare"—i.e. the hostile meeting of more or less honourable men with arms in their hands, is the same thing as the killing of poor officers in bed with their wives, the shooting of young men out for a harmless walk, the shooting of women at lawn tennis parties, and the shooting in the back of poor policemen in a crowded street!

"Bolshevik" or "Red Indian" tactics—possibly. But what we should call—murder most foul!

Yours etc.,

"CULTOR VERITATIS"

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Mr. Poynter's letter in your issue of the 12th instant is ingenious of course, but will hardly convince anyone, except perhaps that Mr. Poynter is a special pleader. The fact that the Ulster Covenant and every-

thing done under it had for their object the retaining of allegiance to the Sovereign and the Union with England which is a fundamental part of the existing constitution of the United Kingdom, makes it absurd to talk about "treason" in such a connection. Suppose there was a movement to put Wales under an All Celtic Irish and Welsh Parliament and Wales armed to resist it, the Welsh would then be "rebels" in Mr. Poynter's sense. It is clever nonsense.

Yours etc.,

A. FRASER FOSTER

42, Pelborne Road, Hove.

#### CLASSICAL QUOTATIONS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The review published in your current issue of Mr. Norman Davey's 'Guinea Girl,' appears to me to be a little harsh in its criticism of his classical quotations. It is perhaps true that Mr. Davey has not selected the best possible emendations of the corrupt text of the Pervigilium, and it is also regrettable that the text of Sappho which he employed is marred by an ignorance of the ordinary *Æolic*  $\psi\lambda\omega\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ ; but to say, as your reviewer does of the epigram from the Anthology quoted on the title page, that the "more Greek one knows the less readily can one construe it," and to say that it is presumably of Mr. Davey's own composition is surely a sad piece of ignorance or heavy sarcasm. The epigram in question is a very well-known couplet by Parmenion and is numbered in the Palatine Anthology as the 34th epigram of the 5th book. Your reviewer appears to have been ignorant of the use of the genitive in Greek to express price and also to have been unable to supply the double ellipse of the verb.

As for Mr. Davey's alleged mis-translation of the phrase 'perdidi musam tacendo' by the words "in silence have I lost my muse," I cannot feel as a Tripos examiner that I should have regarded this loose translation of the instrumental ablative as a very serious mistake.

Your reviewer animadvertes also on Mr. Davey's printing of the conjecture "bibas" in his quotation from Horace, Book I, Ode xx, line 10. What the correct reading here is I should not venture to assert with any confidence, but it cannot surely be open to criticism if a novelist quotes a conjectural reading about which so learned an editor of Horace as Dr. Wickham has said: "If any treatment is needed this is the simplest."

I must apologise for asking for so much of your space, but it appears to me to be desirable in these days, when the study of the classics is so seriously threatened by the advocates of materialism, but a novelist who attempts to impart a flavour of the classics to his writings should, even in the case of error, be received with indulgent criticism and never in any case, as in your review, with inaccurate asperity.

Yours etc.,

G. GRANT MORRIS

Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

[Our Reviewer writes: "The fact that Mr. Davey in his first novel thought 'meus filius' was a vocative and 'demail' meant to-day, did not suggest to us that within a twelve month he was to be treated as a scholar whose silent emendations were to be received with respect. We rather thought he was quoting from out of date texts or from memory. 'Turgentes' for 'jurgentes,' for example, as a conjecture is obvious and bad. We note that the 'alleged mistranslation' was a mistranslation, and that the German Professor's conjecture is unnecessary; it is not adopted in any standard text. Whose is the 'inaccurate asperity'? The final paragraph of Mr. Morris's letter is simply an amplification of our own position on classical quotations. But we owe Mr. Davey and Parmenion an apology for our remark on the epigram, and Mr. Morris our thanks for his scholia on it."—Ed. S.R.]

## Reviews

### EINSTEIN WITHOUT TEARS

*The Ideas of Einstein's Theory.* By J. H. Thirring. Translated by Rhoda A. B. Russell. Methuen. 5s. net.

*An Introduction to the Theory of Relativity.* By Lyndon Bolton. Methuen. 5s. net.

*Relativity and the Universe.* By Harry Schmidt. Translated by K. Wichmann. Methuen. 5s. net.

*The Fourth Dimension Simply Explained.* A Collection of Essays selected from those submitted in the *Scientific American's* Prize Contest. Edited by H. P. Manning. Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.

*Einstein the Searcher.* By Alexander Moszkowski. Translated by Henry L. Brose. Methuen. 12s. 6d. net.

IT seems extraordinary that while the publishing firms are loudly protesting that the increased costs of production are reducing noticeably the output of high class works in science and literature, in one department of mathematical science the production is excessive. A new popular exposition of Einstein appears, for the moment at least, at the rate of about one a day. It will be observed that all the books at the head of this review are published by one house—that of Methuen; and it would seem that they find an insistent demand for a plain account of the matter in language which the ordinary man can understand. A very little reflection will show how reasonable this demand is. Can anyone imagine that the conception of the universe as finite and yet unbounded, put forward with convincing demonstration by a world-famous mathematician, could or would be confined to discussions in abstract terms between members of learned societies? There is an instinctive feeling in the civilized human mind that every concept is in its very nature communicable, and that any concept which can effectively conceal itself beneath some mathematical expression is suspect. We want an easy account of Einstein's theory and we are impatient when we are put off by being told that we must as a preliminary master the differential calculus.

There are two ways of making Einstein easy. One is to omit—cleverly, so that the omission passes unnoticed—whatever the expounder does not himself understand or if he does understand finds it troublesome to explain. It is in most cases an unconscious suppression, a voluntary inattention to what is not plain in order to make what is plain plainer. The other is to explain something which is not the principle of relativity at all but sounds like it. This is often very successful. An amusing illustration occurred not long ago when a distinguished physicist in a scientific lecture made a reference to Einstein's theory and then performed the familiar experiment of placing the cathode rays in a magnetic field. The next day a leading newspaper reported the lecture with a headline "Einstein's theory verified. Bending of a ray of light."

Dr. J. H. Thirring in his 'Ideas of Einstein's Theory' has succeeded in giving a plain account and a complete account, without either of these devices. There is no fencing with or shirking difficulties and no attempt to turn the inquirer off the track. It is admirably translated. There is no mathematics in the technical sense, but a simple and straightforward account of "the ideas," showing how they developed and how the Special Theory led to the General Theory. The writer is not handicapped by having to avoid mathematical symbols, he conceives the task in a way which does not call for them, and would not be assisted by them. Mr. Lyndon Bolton, on the other hand, is clearly oppressed by the restriction—in fact he finds a great deal which he simply cannot express at all without resort to symbols. He tells us that the task of



writing the prize essay was a positive burden to him in the necessity imposed on him of suppressing symbols. Mathematical expression also gives him a positive advantage for it saves him from the distressing difficulty of showing how to banish metaphysics. Directly he tries to state the ideas in ordinary language he seems to recoil from the sea of metaphysical speculation into which he feels driven to plunge. Dr. Harry Schmidt's book is a popular exposition which originated in a course of lectures. It is ornate and picturesque in treatment and it still retains the rhetorical flavour of the platform exposition.

The Fourth Dimension, which purports to be "simply" explained in the book Mr. Manning has edited, is not the "time" dimension of Minkowski's four-dimensional continuum, but an old friend and favourite, the subject of 'Flat-land' and other mathematical romances which belong to the days before the Einstein revolution. The book consists of essays which competed for a prize offered by the *Scientific American*. Mr. Moszkowski's book is of an entirely different order. It is a book about the man. Albert Einstein is 42 years old and his ancestry, birth, education and career, beyond the fact of his extraordinary mathematical genius, are devoid of any romantic elements whatever. Mr. Moszkowski, a member of the Berlin Scientific Association, tells us that he heard the name of Einstein for the first time in a lecture which Henri Poincaré delivered to that Association in 1910. Some years later he met Einstein in connexion with the same "Association" and became personally acquainted with him, apparently by the happy contrivance of getting himself placed next him at a public dinner. At any rate he realized to the full the greatness of the occasion and the possibility that lay in it. He started a hero-worship and followed his hero wherever he could, taking down and recording the most casual words which fell from him in the course of conversation. We gather from a remark in the book that Mr. Moszkowski is at least a generation older than his hero. Those who had the privilege of conversing with Einstein when he visited this country in the spring know how delightfully free and expansive he is, ready to discourse seriously on his own special topic, equally ready to turn off on to any topic of general interest. Mr. Moszkowski has written a detailed account of the conversations he has had with him; he dignifies them with the term dialogues, and on his side at any rate they appear to have been carefully prepared in advance. The design is to be the Boswell to a modern Johnson. The result is a superficial and gossiping account of Einstein's views on such heterogeneous topics as Leonardo da Vinci, the equality of the sexes, the value of the matriculation examination, Nietzsche's Zarathustra. The author sees to it that the reader shall never forget that in all this he is enjoying a privileged and intimate insight into the nature and personality of a hero.

#### RAILWAYS IN WAR TIME

*British Railways and the Great War.* By Edwin A. Pratt. Selwyn & Blount. 2 vols. 42s. net.

ALTHOUGH most of the war work of our railways was done under our eyes it remained for most of us in its totality, and even in much of its detail, almost as mysterious as the work of the Navy. The smooth and inconspicuous way in which the railway companies assumed and carried the gigantic burdens which war laid upon them was a tribute to the general excellence of their peace-time administration, but more particularly it was the result of careful and intelligent preparation during nearly fifty years. The Engineer and Railway Volunteer Staff Corps, created in 1865, began the work of making and pigeonholing plans for emergency troop movements, mobilisation time-tables and war traffic generally; the War Railway Council, formed in 1896, carried it on further, and plans for the employment of railway engines, rolling stock and personnel

in overseas warfare were discussed in 1905. But it was the Railway Executive Committee, appointed in November, 1912, to which was due the chief credit for the state of readiness in which the crisis of August, 1914, found the railways, for the ease with which they passed from the control of 130 companies to that of the State, and for the skill with which the whole group, thus unified, was administered. The essential merit of the arrangement was that the Railway Executive Committee, instead of being an improvised body of distinguished strangers, was simply the twelve general managers of the principal railways, working together, under a new name, on problems with which in principle, and often in minutest detail also, they were already familiar.

What they accomplished at home and abroad, and what was done in other branches of war administration by railway men, is the theme of Mr. Pratt's able and admirable history. It is impossible within the limits of available space to do more than indicate in barest outline the various and interesting matters recorded and discussed in these 1,200 pages. Amongst them are the financial arrangements made between the Government and the Companies, the despatch of the British Expeditionary Force, restrictions on travel, ambulance trains, the conveyance of Belgian refugees and Belgian soldiers on leave, services rendered gratuitously, the reactions of railway control on coast-wise steamship services, the transport of munitions, the transport-worker's battalions, the enlistment of railway men, the voyages of railway steamers in unfamiliar and perilous seas, the employment of women, Admiralty railway traffic with Thurso, Invergordon, Dalmore, Aberdeen, Grangemouth, Immingham and Harwich, waggon-pooling, the export of railway material to France and the East, plans against invasion, war-time labour difficulties, demobilisation, decontrol and reorganisation. These topics are dealt with both generally and in relation to sixteen of the principal railway companies, and there are a great number of capital half-tone illustrations, maps, diagrams and a good index.

Much of the information contained in Mr. Pratt's pages will be absolutely new to even well-informed readers; for examples (taken at random), that the Leyland motor-lorries which did such excellent work on the Western front were constructed in thousands as to their front axles, chassis frames, brake and pedal-shafts and gate-changes, bodies, canopies and cabs by the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Company at their Horwich and Newton Heath works; that the London & North Western ran a special through train daily from Euston to Thurso from February, 1917, to April, 1919, for naval officers and men only; that in 1918 the United States Navy was bringing immense numbers of mines to Kyle of Lochalsh which were carried by the Highland Railway to Dalmore on Cromarty Firth and there assembled and tested, whilst a similar traffic was being carried on by means of motor lighters from Corpach at the Western end of the Caledonian Canal to Muirtown, another American mine dépôt near Inverness. These mines were all laid in that gigantic minefield, known as the Northern Barrage, which extended from the Orkneys to Norway and was virtually complete when the Armistice was signed.

It will be impossible for railway stockholders to read Mr. Pratt's account of the invaluable contribution made by the companies and their servants to the successful prosecution of the war without some melancholy, if not indignant, reflections upon the depreciation suffered by their property while under the control of the State. Immediately before the war, for instance, the ordinary stock of the London & North Western Company stood at 125½; to-day its value in the market is about 67. Every other industry, whether State-controlled or free, was rewarded with greatly increased profits for its contribution to the national effort: the railways, whose contribution was of unrivalled magnitude and value, gained no excess profits and have been returned to their owners with their very moderate earning-power seri-

ously, and perhaps permanently, impaired. The smarting sense of injustice aroused by this experience will not be sensibly allayed by the long list of honours, public offices, and emoluments conferred upon railway officials from the erstwhile Deputy General Manager of the North Eastern Railway Company downwards.

Mr. Pratt's attitude to his subject is that of the sincere admirer and appreciative recorder rather than the critic. It is inevitable that in human affairs and activities of such magnitude there should have been miscalculations, waste of effort, errors of judgment, and valuable lessons to be learnt therefrom. Of all these Mr. Pratt, like a good Court historian, says little or nothing. There remains room for a book on this aspect of the business, and although it could not have the popular interest of these volumes it would be of real and permanent value to students of transport and military science in all countries. We hope that Mr. Pratt himself will write it, but in any case it will be largely based on his work.

#### OXFORD POETRY

*Oxford Poetry*, 1921. Edited by Alan Porter, Richard Hughes and Robert Graves. Oxford: Blackwell. 3s. 6d. net.

BECAUSE of the exclusion of the work of those undergraduates who write musically, but alas! conventionally, of "brimming chalices, vermilion lips, chrysoprase, lotuses, arabesques and darkling spires against glimmering skies"—subjects which, in the opinion of the Editors, form an undesirable local fashion in verse—the latest and slimmest volume of 'Oxford Poetry' contains specimens of the work of but ten poets. The result is a refreshing change from the aforesaid puerilities; but it may be doubted whether in barring one fashion the Editors have not merely made room for another. If that be so, let it be said at once that the usurping fashion is at once less local and infinitely less tedious.

It is the fashion of poetry to-day, reacting from the sleek, almost indecent polish of Victorianism, to be robust and untidy; even more it is its fashion, reacting from the artificial embellishments of that epoch, to be natural, penetrating, precise. It will have nothing to do with veneer; it is concerned rather to describe minutely and exactly the grain of plain deal boards. But, essentially right as this spirit is, it still requires inspiration to make real poetry with it. The passion for mere acuteness of description is not enough; the description must also have the "universality" of poetry. It must arrest by its significant beauty. Besides, too ardent a passion for more accuracy may in fact produce less accuracy; for the poet searches in his head for the adjective which shall exactly fit his subject and as the result of over-scrupulous meditation there bursts at last from his brain a word that may by associations in his mind precisely fulfil his meaning, but for the stranger be perhaps almost meaningless.

When a brass sun staggers above the sky

—the opening line of Mr. Hughes's 'Tramp,' is neither beautiful nor accurate. It may have meant something to Mr. Hughes, but it conveys no truthful impression to the outsider. Mr. Alan Porter's 'Summer Bathing' has undeniable accuracy but not beauty. The lines:

... in mid-course I staggered, having trod  
Firm on a flat and spiny thistle ...

are not poetical; they do not succeed in conveying the poet's emotion—doubtless considerable in this instance—across to the reader. Mr. Edgell Rickword's 'Trench Poets' belongs to the cynical-crude school, created by the war, which is dying out. It is merely ugly.

But there is plenty of poetry in the volume. Mr. Robert Graves, of course, is admirable, and the simpler he is the more there is to admire. 'Henry and Mary' is worthy of a De la Mare:

Henry was a worthy king,  
Mary was his queen,  
He gave to her a snowdrop  
Upon a stalk of green.  
Then all for his kindness  
And all for his care  
She gave him a new-laid egg  
In the garden there.  
Love, can you sing?  
I cannot sing.  
Or story-tell?  
Not one I know.  
Then let us play at queen and king,  
As down the garden walks we go.

That has the simple dignity of the nursery rhyme; 'Night Sounds' is an example of what we may call the natural history process at its best. Mr. Blunden needs no introduction; indeed it is with a pleasant shock that one is reminded of the years still at his disposal by finding him in a book of undergraduate verse. We like Mr. Prewitt for his 'Comrade, why do you weep?' and his 'I went out into the fields'; but most of all we are grateful for Mr. Louis Golding, whose 'Shepherd Singing Ragtime' deserves to be quoted in full, and whose 'Ploughman at the Plough' shall be:

He behind the straight plough stands  
Stalwart, firm shafts in firm hands.  
Naught he cares for wars and naught  
For the fierce disease of thought.  
Only for the winds, the sheer  
Naked impulse of the year,  
Only for the soil, which stares  
Clean into God's face, he cares.  
In the stark might of his deed  
There is more than art or creed;  
In his wrist more strength is hid  
Than the monstrous Pyramid;  
Stauncher than stern Everest  
Be the muscles of his breast;  
Not the Atlantic sweeps a flood  
Potent as the ploughman's blood.  
He, his horse, his ploughshare, these  
Are the only verities.  
Dawn to dusk with God he stands,  
The Earth poised on his broad hands.

#### THE HEALTH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

*The Private Character of Queen Elizabeth*. By Frederick Chamberlin. Lane. 18s. net.

EIGHT years ago the author of this volume "set aside all other affairs" to fix his attention upon the life of Queen Elizabeth, and the result of his pertinacious study of documents and comparison of reports is worthy of respect. His attention was gradually concentrated on the morals and the health of the monarch, and in the course of his researches he came upon evidence which led him to believe that all precedent historians had been in error. Let us say at once that Mr. Chamberlin has produced a book which is of positive, though of limited value. It suffers from the fault, incident to works of this kind, of bursting the open door and felling the already fallen foe to the ground. Moreover, it is open to the charge of special pleading and in not a few places of obvious exaggeration. We consider the importance of the enquiry to reside almost entirely in its investigation of the health of Elizabeth. This is of considerable interest, and Mr. Chamberlin has expended immense labour in putting together, as he claims for the first time, all the evidence as to the queen's physical condition from childhood to the grave. In this he has supported his views by a mass of expert medical opinion.

Hitherto, Elizabeth has been described by her successive biographers as a woman of magnificent constitution, superior to fatigue, and though perhaps in some points of unusual or even abnormal conformation, supported through all the trials of her turbulent reign by immense physical vigour. Mr. Chamberlin will have none of this. He startles us by asserting that Elizabeth was an invalid from her fifteenth year onwards. He



puts side by side the records of her ailments, and has presented them to a number of eminent physicians for their diagnosis. He submitted an arrangement of the facts, as he had collected them, to these authorities for an opinion on their pathological significance. Some of the doctors immediately expatiated in the sense that Mr. Chamberlin desired; others were more cautious. The replies of the late Sir William Osler and of Sir Clifford Allbutt appear to us to be the most valuable, because the most guarded. Osler said that Elizabeth evidently had a strongly neurotic constitution, but very wisely refused to admit that she was afflicted habitually with ill-health. He suggested that probably gossip made far too much of her passing indispositions, and we venture to add that Mr. Chamberlin has certainly made too much of them. Sir Clifford Allbutt sagely suggests that "the tittle-tattle of Courts and the subtlety of embassies much exaggerated the symptoms." The subject is not a very pleasant one, and is treated by some of the experts with unnecessary fulness. We really have not got the evidence to go upon, and Mr. Chamberlin has not the serenity of judgment which is requisite for a final opinion. But we would not speak unsympathetically of his curious volume, which has a permanent historic value.

#### MR. LUCAS AND "SAKI"

*Urbanities.* By E. V. Lucas. Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.  
*Reginald and Reginald in Russia.* By "Saki." Methuen. 6s. net.

READING Mr. Lucas in the moments of his urbanity is like ices on a September day. Here there is no psychological compulsion, there no meteorological, to read or to eat. When you have once started either occupation, there is really no particular reason for stopping. Ices in excess (but it depends upon your age and sex whether the words are not self-contradictory) may, we must admit, be injurious. Mr. Lucas's 'Urbanities' never have so positive an effect. What is one to do with such a quality as Urbanity? There is no erection of any critical edifice conceivable on its polite, self-effacing sands. "I did not, did I, pretend I was stone?" it will remonstrate gently. Suppose you protest that you expected the discovery of a *rarior avis*, in the essay 'Concerning Rarities,' after the preparations which had preceded it, than the bird Mr. Lucas actually catches for you. . . "In the hotel where I was staying there was a chambermaid who, after she had brought in the hot water in the morning, went back to the door again, stooped, and brought in my shoes." Or suppose you quote the remark of Flora, the philosophic old flower-woman, with which Mr. Lucas gives the concluding point to one of his sketches. "O yes, you have . . . every one's got a basket, though they don't always know where to take it." You will suggest deferentially, "But it means so little. It's so sententious, really . . ." And Urbanity replies somewhat huffily, "You mistake me. It's not my business to mean anything profound. I needn't even be particularly amusing. It's my business to be . . . well, *urbane*, you know." But you should read Mr. Lucas's new volume. There is simply no reason why you shouldn't.

There is every reason why you should, on the other hand, read 'Reginald and Reginald in Russia,' by "Saki," although the two constituent volumes have previously appeared singly in 1904 and 1910. "Saki's" mind irresistibly recalls to us a Macedonian lizard of incredible agility we once studied, that apprehended, as it were, every mosquito or moth that ventured into the elastic area of its operation. The comparison is close not merely in the conduct of the two organisms but in their appearances. They are radiant and green and swift. Or suddenly they cower into a cranny of rocks, frozen under a terror which has appalled them. This volume affords an opportunity for the study of "Saki's" development. 'Reginald' is wit, inex-

haustible, unexhausting, but mere wit. But the later volume shows the maturing of those high powers whose sacrifice in the war was not far distant. Combined with the old wit is a new instinct for horror and irony which, in this combination, we associate with Edgar Poe. The grim explanation of 'The Reticence of Lady Anne' illustrates the fusion of these powers; but such a story as 'Gabriel-Ernest' has the distinction and poetry of a tale by E. M. Forster, high enough praise even for our gallant and lamented "Saki."

#### BURNS AND HIS FRAILTIES

*The Truth About Burns.* By D. McNaught. Maclehose, Jackson. 7s. 6d. net.

LOVERS of Burns will sympathise with Dr. McNaught's anxiety to clear the moral character of the poet from the aspersions cast upon it by Dr. Currie and his followers. But very many of them will share our regret that this new life should be so much preoccupied with the discussion of questions which were never of the first importance and are now, after 100 years and more, of very little moment. 'The Truth about Burns,' as one might gather it from this apologia, is not that he was a supreme lyric poet, but that he was neither a conscienceless libertine nor a sot. We wish that Dr. McNaught, who is to be trusted as a historian and appears to be quite capable of seeing the facts of Burns's life in their true perspective and significance, had presented them entirely *de novo* in the order and proportion in which they would naturally be set forth to-day by a liberal, intelligent and well-informed biographer not obsessed by the errors of earlier workers in the same field. If this had been done, and if Dr. McNaught's differences with Currie, Walker, Lockhart and the rest had been settled in footnotes and appendices instead of forming the principal theme of the text, the result would have been a book not only much more interesting to the reader but also really much more just to Burns. Dr. McNaught reminds us of Mr. Birrell's protest: "As for your opinion of Sterne as a man of conduct, is it worth while having one? It is a poor business bludgeoning men who bore the brunt of life a long century ago, and whose sole concern now with the world is to delight it." We gather that he, too, would have been glad to allow the discussion of Burns's human frailties (of which far too much has already been made), to drop. But it seems that the "truculent tone" adopted by some recent commentators has aroused "a feeling of resentment in Burnsian circles" and so poor Rob has once more to stand trial for his peccadilloes in order that various counts of the indictment may be dismissed as not proven, and extenuating circumstances adduced in regard to others. It is all rather regrettable, and even slightly ridiculous, but the ardent loyalty inspired by a Scottish national hero has its drawbacks and this we take to be one of them. "Holy Willie" is not without his successors and avengers.

#### PALESTINE OF TO-DAY

*The Home of Fadeless Splendour.* By G. N. Whittingham. Hutchinson. 24s. net.

THE first Crusaders slept in their desert graves four hundred years before Tasso hymned their exploits. The Crusaders of 1917—the last of the Crusaders surely—have won a swifter, if less melodious, meed of praise. The miraculous escape of one of their number inspired a visit of gratitude to the Holy Land and 'The Home of Fadeless Splendour' completes the thank-offering.

Despite the denials of foreword and introduction the author has given us a super-guide-book to the past, present and future of Palestine. Perhaps he will resent the contradiction less if it is coupled with the assurance that his efforts are not unworthy of the theme. He has the scholar's reverence for the past and the tourist's eye for beauty, with a side-glance at convenience. Through-

out he thrills with the pious ecstasy of the pilgrim. His erudition stops short of pedantry, his enthusiasm is clear-eyed. He surrenders his bottle of Jordan-water to the imperious demands of an over-heated radiator. The triangular feud of Christian, Jew and Moslem is treated with a fine impartiality. The less edifying vendettas of Latin and Greek, Copt and Syrian which defile the holy times and places of Jerusalem are described with a sufficiency of melancholy detail. Full justice is done to the historical and archaeological attractions of Jerusalem and the solemn pageantries of Easter week. But it is a relief to escape from the overwhelming and rather self-conscious sanctities of Zion to homelier places where the happiest years of Jesus were spent. We feel something of the magic of their beauty, something of the sadness of their decay. We cross Galilee in a sudden storm such as shook the Apostles' faith; we wander beside the still waters and green pastures of Nazareth; we stand beside the sullen waters of the Dead Sea and strain our eyes for a glimpse of the accursed cities. The pilgrimage ends at Bethlehem, where Ruth stood amid the alien corn and the stripling David watched his flock. In the very cave of the Nativity Christian hands have shed Christian blood. But vision which has not been blurred by Christian fanaticism can still see ghostly shepherds hastening to the village and the caravan of the Magi following a bright star.

In the peroration to his preface "the author trusts that 'The Home of Fadeless Splendour' will be of interest not only to those who have visited Palestine, or intend to, but also to those who may never have the opportunity." These, he hopes, will find in its pages something to bring to their minds the "Land of Unchanging Beauty." He will not be disappointed.

#### LONDON OF THE FUTURE

*London of the Future.* By the London Society. Edited by Sir Aston Webb. Fisher Unwin. 42s. net.

THIS is a book that every official administrator, and indeed every citizen of London should possess. Its compilation has evidently been a labour of love, and each of the eighteen chapters is by an expert contributor who has given of his best. Briefly it forecasts what London might be, may be. All the authorities who contribute to this book do not see eye to eye. Why should they? The schemes are so magnificent. For example there is the disagreement as to whether the new Charing Cross Bridge, which will help to make the South side of London as important as the North, shall be a high level, or a low level bridge; but these and other disagreements present no real difficulty. When men have one goal in view the roads to it, with a little sympathy and persuasion, easily converge.

The aim of the London Society, which has produced this book, is "to unite all Londoners who see the necessity for stimulating a wider concern for the beauty of the capital city, for the preservation of its old charms, and the careful consideration of its new developments." Sir Aston Webb, the chairman, contributes an Introduction summing up the various essays; and rightly he has placed first the paper on 'The Opportunities of London,' by Mr. T. Raffles Davison. It was Mr. Davison who, a few years ago, in conjunction with Mr. Niven, produced a scheme showing, in a detailed and picturesque drawing, the vast improvement in London that would follow from the new Charing Cross Bridge, curving round from the Mall, through Northumberland Avenue, a great highway to a station on the Surrey side where Waterloo now stands.

Such a scheme stirs the imagination, as indeed do many of the other proposals, including the one that conjures up the vision of a time when electric traction is perfected and all railway lines will disappear into the earth at a radius of some fifteen miles from Charing Cross, and the stations and bridges with them, while the old railway tracks will become highways. Another is a green belt, at least a mile wide, round London,

with garden cities as separate units outside. These may be dreams, but they are possible dreams, and many of the dreamers have their feet firmly on the ground, and approach their subjects as practical men. We should be sorry to see the architectural schemes carried out by Sir Aston Webb himself; but we are grateful to him for the enthusiasm which has inspired this interesting volume.

#### LITERATURE AND LIFE

*Literature and Life.* By E. B. Osborn. Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.

MR. OSBORN is always worth reading, and has qualities that give him a rather unusual position in modern journalism. Of the tribe of Henley, though certainly not "least of the Henleyites," as he once modestly declared, he is at once a Victorian and a Georgian; a stout Tory of the literary world, and yet ever ready to give his attention and kindly encouragement to the young experimentalists, and especially the young poets. Above all, he is interested by many things not most commonly associated with the man of books—the Canadian North-West, boxing, Rugby football, cricket, and beer, to name but a few. He has the best of rights to call his collected articles 'Literature and Life.'

On the whole, however, he is at his best when discussing a subject purely literary, and it is to be regretted that there are not more such studies in this collection. The best of all the essays is that devoted to Vachel Lindsay, the astonishing young American "jazz-poet."

But where [he writes] are the new rhythms of a new age to be found? In the spoken speech of the people, of course; in the so-called prose of everyday discourse, in which we communicate our emotions in colloquial cadences that are often remembered to the end of a lifetime.

The idea may appear at first sight commonplace, but it is in fact original. For when Coleridge and Wordsworth discussed the language proper to poetry, it was not *rhythm* with which they were concerned. And it is an idea very helpful to us when considering the poetical aims of Mr. Kipling, as well as those of Mr. Lindsay and some of the less-known young American adventurers.

The essay, 'Beer, Noble Beer,' and indeed the great majority of the others, are so good that it is a pity Mr. Osborn has included one or two articles written, it would seem, when his invention was not at its most vigorous, and really not worth binding. Of 'Love or Eugenics' and 'Christmas Presents' it can only be said that they are very small beer, which Mr. Osborn would probably consider condemnation enough.

#### THE SUDAN

*The Sudan in Evolution.* By Percy F. Martin. Constable. 42s. net.

STRONGLY recommended to the general public and to the student of African Administrations by General Wingate, Governor-General of the Sudan (1899-1916), who testifies in a preface to the conscientious manner in which the author has carried out his task, this book is an extended study of the economic, financial, and administrative conditions of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. It is a very full book, but rather long, and might have been compressed with advantage, as it contains a considerable number of repetitions—for example, the statement that the Sudan is a million square miles in area occurs several times. Mr. Martin's idea perhaps was that as his book might become a standard work of reference on the Sudan, everything connected with each phase of his subject might very well be grouped together, even at the cost of saying what had been said elsewhere. However this may be, he has written a most informative volume, packed with facts from beginning to end, some old, but mainly new,



and nearly always interesting and well-expressed. He acquired his impressions of the Sudan in the course of a lengthy tour, during which he visited many of the outstations, and he was given all possible assistance by the authorities both on his journeys and in gathering material for his book, which is therefore doubly valuable. It appears opportunely, too, at a time when the question whether the Sudan is to go to Egypt or remain under British control is in the melting-pot. There is a large and excellent map of the country.

### Fiction

*Maki.* By R. J. Minney. Lane. 7s. 6d. net.

*Sidonie.* By Pierre Coalfleet. Collins. 7s. 6d. net.

*The Samovar Girl.* Frederick Moore. Appleton. 8s. 6d. net.

MR. MINNEY'S novel, 'Maki,' has a number of unintentional virtues which make this record of an Indian girl's evolution not unworth an hour's attention. The whole story is written with such evident authority, whether the scene is of the young Maki's domestic prison overlooking a crowded Calcutta street, or the more luxurious apartment in which she is visited by her corpulent native lover, that we are provided with an entertaining problem. Is it a man or a woman who has chronicled Maki's decline from pampered seclusion into eyeless beggary? Is it an Englishman who is capable of such curious turns of psychology and phrase? Surely, we argue, this exposition of the "purdah" system was not conceived from a feminine, much less a feminist, point of view: "Women are placed behind the impenetrable veil of their quarter and men and women are paired off without having seen each other. Every woman has an equal chance." And it was only an English novelist who could write: "Spoilt at birth because of a slight physical deformity, Ranjit had been indulged to a point of spoiling." A strain of naive informativeness runs through the book. We know now why wealthy Indians are always bulky. "It is the rich food that gives them their girth and they are generally dyspeptic." The politeness with which Maki's guests are treated at Maki's wedding is soothing to Imperial instincts which have lately been too inadequately consulted in Indian politics.

"Sidonie" is the record of a lady who is as completely of the West as Maki is of the East. The fortunes of this peasant girl from Upper Savoy run a precisely opposite course—from beggary to pampered seclusion in a large pink château. But the opposed parallel roads of Mr. Minney's and Mr. Coalfleet's heroines achieve the miracle of meeting at one point. There is a tragic moment when both of them lurk in the gutter by the wayside, while those who love them pass by. Yet whilst Maki's head is at once bloody and bowed, the efficient Sidonie remains the captain of her soul. We find the early part of the narrative most worth reading—the avalanches on the white hills Sidonie so pluckily traversed to add a few centimes to her family's income, her trout-tickling in frozen streams, her stupid intolerable mother. The account of Sidonie's evolution into a Bloomsbury landlady fills us with fantastic horrors. There seems no reason why all her sisters in Bloomsbury should not follow her example and transfer their attentions from their cooks and maids to some literary boarder in quest of the material for a new novel.

Mr. Moore's 'Samovar Girl' needs more than a samovar to make us feel she is Russian, in the sense we have recognized the two heroines we have dealt with as exclusively Indian and French, whatever circum-

stances enveloped them. But she is one of the pawns in an ingeniously worked out game. It is a pity Mr. Moore and his publishers have told us so many of the moves on the dust-cover. We should have liked to follow out for ourselves the intricacies of the position created when Peter Gordon (né Gorekin), an American officer formerly a Russian prisoner in Siberia, returns after the Bolshevik revolution to avenge his father's death by the murder of the Governor of the prison. For he finds the Governor nothing but a derelict on the waters released by the Bolshevik destruction of the sluice-gates; and, what is much more significant, the father of a beautiful young lady who assumes the rôle of a parlour-maid and carries in his samovar. Further comment would be indecorous.

*The Triumph of the Egg.* By Sherwood Anderson. New York: Huebsch. \$2.00.

THE studies of middle-class life in Ohio which Mr. Anderson has collected into this volume cannot be called short stories in the accepted sense of the word. That is to say, they have none of the "snap" of magazine fiction; they have indeed no beginnings and no endings and no middles; they have not even that vital surprise on the last page which we inevitably associate with the true short story, especially as supplied by America. It is a refreshing change to get away from this intricate and often laborious technique—laborious, that is, in hands less deft than an O. Henry's—to the unfenced, trackless territory of Mr. Anderson's genius. His is rather the Russian method; some of these tales are very strongly Tchekovian—we can think of no other English-speaking writer who could have produced anything like them except perhaps Miss Katherine Mansfield, and her canvas is not so wide nor her colour so rich and varied. Mr. Anderson's analysis is terribly penetrating, and curiously enough it is nearly always his women whom he does best.

'Unlighted Lamps' is the only story in the collection that has anything approaching complete form; but this Russian method—if we may name it so—though its rules are less complex and confined, requires a hundred times more artistry, and Mr. Anderson is not consistently successful. Sometimes he is too diffuse, not sufficiently significant. For intense significance is essential to success in this type of fiction; it should be concerned with turning points and decisions in men's lives or else with moments that reveal in a flash the essence of their souls—it should in fact be concerned with "psychological moments," sometimes in the original and literal meaning of the phrase. 'I Want to Know Why' and 'The New Englander' are defective in this quality but they have the breath of reality, and to everything he writes this author brings a simple beauty, even to his rude study of 'Maternity.' 'The Egg' is a whimsical piece of characterisation, and 'The Other Woman' is an amazingly shrewd satire. The last and longest story in the book, 'Out of Nothing into Nowhere,' is also the best. It is a novel in everything but length and it confirms our opinion that the novel is Mr. Anderson's true medium. The illustrations of impressions in clay by Mr. Tennessee Mitchell form an interesting addition to the collection.

*The Haunting.* By C. A. Dawson Scott. Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.

THE essence of a "crawler" must always be the power to induce crawliness. If he displays this quality, the author, however indifferent a writer, has

# NORTH BRITISH AND MERCANTILE

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succeeded in his task; if not, he has failed, no matter what other attractions he has had to offer. Exactly what makes the flesh creep is indefinable. All we can say is that certain words, or arrangements of words, have had that effect upon us. You may load your pages with blood and insanity and spectres, and raise no human hair; but you may provoke a pleasing spinal discomfort with the odd, light footstep of Edward Hyde, the gentle movement of a curtain in 'La petite Roque,' or the mere accidental substitution of the word "did" for "does" in 'The Turn of the Screw.' Something, of course, must be allowed for the circumstances in which such a book is read. Its effect will doubtless be greater in an empty house at midnight than in a garden at noon. But this is only a question of degree. If the desirable shiver is there, it will make itself felt, even in a crowded carriage on the Underground Railway.

From the nature of its story 'The Haunting' invites criticism as a "crawler," for which, indeed, it possesses all the necessary ingredients: fratricide, retributive hallucinations, a mouldering house on the Cornish coast, a secret passage, a witch, superstitious peasants, the terror of guilty solitude. It is a strange and rather moving tale, well written, and interesting from the first page to the last. We read it, by the fireside, with attentive pleasure, with critical approval, with every wish and belief that the indispensable chilling of the marrow would come. It did not; but, for all that, we recommend those right-minded people who love to poison their hours of nocturnal loneliness and corrupt their dreams, to try the book for themselves. Horror in literature is largely an affair of idiosyncrasy. They may find it here, and be richly rewarded for their pains; and if they do not, they will at least have spent a comfortable hour or two.

*The Young Enchanted.* By Hugh Walpole. Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.

IT is unlikely that 'The Young Enchanted' will add anything to the literary reputation of the author of 'The Dark Forest.' He here discards realism in favour of romantic comedy, with unfortunate results. The general impression left on the mind of his reader is that Mr. Walpole had nothing particular to say, but that, feeling it was desirable that he should write another book, he contrived, with the fluency of an old hand, to fill four hundred pages of print without becoming actually unreadable. The whole account of the hero's love affair with Christina (a girl who derives from Yvette Obardi and Vivie Warren) is totally incredible; while that of his sister, with a profligate who has ruined a village maiden, leaves one quite undisturbed. There is a great deal of conversation about art and youth and the building of a new world on the ruins of the old and one thing and another; and it is all discouragingly familiar to us. The satirical pictures of artistic coteries and the households of the newly rich frequently border on burlesque, without ever attaining that richness of humour which makes burlesque its own excuse. There are good passages in 'The Young Enchanted'; it could scarcely be otherwise with an author of Mr. Walpole's gifts. But it is, on the whole, a disappointing book, and unjustifiably long for its material.

*The Debt.* By G. P. Robinson. Duckworth. 7s. 6d. net.

WE should pronounce this, for better for worse, emphatically a man's novel. The female characters, respectable and far otherwise, are painfully insipid. The Harrow and Oxford scenes are steeped in the glorious and uniquely British tradition which regards work as at best an impertinent interruption to the true life of Public Schools and University. The relations of the three heroes with minor ornaments of the

theatrical profession are described, not in accordance with the lurid imaginings of the woman novelist, but in that simply practical spirit of which 'Tom Jones' is the approved example. Notwithstanding such attractions, we have not found this portion of the story enthralling. But from August, 1914, onwards, we at once rise into a higher atmosphere. The routine of the trenches, as experienced by a refined and intelligent nature, its heroism, its grotesqueness, its horrors, and its flashes of something resembling inspiration, have seldom been so appealingly presented. The tragedy of the triple friendship, or more properly of the one out of three left when two others have been successively taken, has a poignancy which could scarcely be exceeded. Yet it is tragedy illuminated by hope. For the lone survivor returning home a cripple for the rest of his days, bereaved through an air-raid of father and mother, jilted on a palpably false pretext by a heartless fiancée, finds consolation in a glimpse of the Beatific Vision obtained amid surroundings apparently the most commonplace. Among many fine passages we would signalise the picture of Armistice Day with its wild rejoicings, as they would appear to a man absorbed in the companionship of the departed. We notice also the Spiritualistic séance, which, just because it is not idealised, impresses us as having a basis in reality.

## Shorter Notices

*Tales of the R.I.C.* (Blackwood, 7s. 6d. net) are written by an author who prefers to remain anonymous for reasons which will be fully apprehended by the reader after he has finished the book, if not before. The stories are concerned, as the title implies, with the daily and hourly hazards surrounding the lives of the Police and Auxiliaries under the virtual state of war in Ireland, which has but lately been suspended, and judging by the experiences recorded not a little craft as well as courage was needed to outwit the organisation of Sinn Féin. The adventures are recounted without any pretensions to literary graces, but with a straight-forward simplicity that suits the subject and adds to the impression of strict verity. The book is welcome as a defence of a much-abused organisation which had, as is here amply shown, unprecedented circumstances with which to contend. In the final chapter the author sounds a warning of the civil strife which in his opinion is bound to follow a settlement of Ireland on the lines now under discussion.

*Common Sense and Self-Help*, by Edmund Dane (Mills & Boon, 2s. 6d. net), is described as a Study in the Economics of Mind Power. The author endeavours to unfold the secret of common sense and its use to form reliable judgments. The indication of his method may be conveyed by some of his chapter headings, which include: 'Thought—Colour and Feeling'; 'Why Minds are Individual'; 'Tests of Common-Sense.' But the obvious weakness of the arguments is that there is really no such thing as common sense. The book may be described as a kind of pocket Pelman, and is to be recommended to those who are prepared to subject their minds to a system of routine-reasoning.

*Gods.* By Shaw Desmond. Duckworth. 8s. 6d. net.

A boy, uncouth, uneducated, yet hiding the spark of genius, emerging from the most unappetising surroundings of poverty and sectarian bitterness into a more spacious world, and winning the love of a beautiful aristocrat—this is the sort of thing that could be done by Mr. Wells or Mr. Bennett in a manner that would rivet our attention and compel our admiration. But Mr. Desmond has not the magic, the humour, the experience of life or the philosophy of Mr. Wells and Mr. Bennett, although he has some of their tricks; and we found it weary work to get to the end of this lengthy book. Where the author is more individual and less edifying—in the scenes descriptive of the Irish countryside and peasantry—he reveals a strong vein of poetry and mysticism. We feel sure that he could give us a very attractive idyll; dreamy, opalescent and haunting; but on the present occasion he has preferred, in the words of his publishers, to illuminate all the undercurrents of modern thought; a vast and indigestible task for which he does not appear to have either the necessary knowledge or cast of mind.

*The Qualified Adventurer*, by Selwyn Jepson (Hutchinson, 8s. 6d. net) is a very successful story for what we believe to be a beginner in the art of fiction. It is well put together, shows some original observation and a light touch. Perhaps, like the heroes of his father, there is a little too much successful homicide, a little too much preparedness for every emergency in the hero, but the story is alive from start to finish, and we welcome a new player to the game of keeping us amused. When we say that the adventure is the recovery of the lost treasure of the Manchu Princes, we have said all that is needed of the subject matter of the book.



# MILLIONS OF CHILDREN IN PERIL OF DEATH.

*Special Correspondent's Cable.*

## Dread Winter Intensifies Infant Suffering.

**THE** tragic and pitiful condition of the starving children is summed up in the extract from a cable recently received from Russia given hereunder. Far from easing up, the situation daily grows more tense and awful, for the dread work started by drought, famine, and disease, is being intensified and prolonged by the grip of the terrible Russian winter.

As these words are being penned, snow falls incessantly and King Frost with his barriers of ice closes the ports and the Volga. So the children of the famine districts look out upon the white pall—symbolising certain and shocking death to many thousands of them. Snow makes the roads impossible—the ice closes the rivers to navigation. Delay must occur, for on snow-blocked roads transport is difficult and precarious. And, unfortunately, delay is fatal. Thousands—tens of thousands—of helpless, suffering little ones have not been fed to-day, and possibly will eat nothing to-morrow. They pine and wither. They sink in the slough of despond, and hope that transport difficulties will be overcome in good time, so that perhaps (if there is food sufficient) they may be fed THE DAY AFTER TO-MORROW! Delay for one day—and in their thousands they will pass into oblivion!

### Special Correspondent's Cable:

CABLE FROM SARATOV, RUSSIA.  
"These children are an appalling example of how famine can crush out almost human semblance from children. Clothed in vile rags, full of vermin, and totally inadequate in this bitter weather their bodies shrunken and distorted almost beyond recognition, their hands like the claws of some grotesque bird, their arms and legs like the limbs of skeletons and their faces wrinkled and wisdomed. Such are the tiny, stricken children in the famine areas of Russia. Only the big, dark, wondering eyes give any indication of the childish beauty which has gone for ever."

### MILLIONS OF BABIES FACING DEATH.

Disaster immeasurable is sweeping through Russia, and millions of little children are face to face with death. They see no ray of hope—no possibility of help! They realise that dread and painful death must be their lot, and they are resigned to it. Can you imagine more appalling conditions—or more awful sufferings than those of the stricken children of Russia?

After all is said and done—after unprecedented efforts on behalf of the helpless children—there are still millions of them heading hopelessly towards INEVITABLE DEATH. The very recitation of fact must make every true-hearted Briton shudder with horror

### IMPERATIVE NEED OF IMMEDIATE HELP.



Can you imagine the feelings of this mother fondling her puny child—the relic of a once happy, well-fed, laughing, chubby baby? But now! Only a grim illustration of the awful effects of Famine. A little stunted frame—bones forcing their way through the skin, with face drawn by emaciation into the semblance of extreme old age. Such are the pathetic sights with which Russia abounds to-day. Oh! the agony of it. Can you—a father, or a mother—look at this actual photograph from the famine area without feeling compelled to send a contribution immediately—BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE—to save innocent little children from the tortures of Hunger and a lingering Death?

### Gruesome Effect of Famine.

In the children's hospitals there is terrible and gruesome evidence of the ravages of famine. One tiny girl, four years old, HAD ONLY HALF HER FACE LEFT, the other half having fallen away. The terrible disease, the doctor said, is due entirely to starvation. And many cases have developed in Khvaluinsk. There are also innumerable cases of rickets and the dread oedema—both due to starvation.

### The Bread of Stricken Russia.

In the hospitals the sisters use dried potato peelings to make bread for their own use, and among other substitutes for flour are dried bark, weeds, leaves, and acorns. An examination of a sample of the bread in common use shows that it contains ONE-TENTH OF RYE FLOUR, while the remaining NINE-TENTHS CONSIST OF SAWDUST, LEAVES and other RUBBISH. What a god-send it must be that this is one of the districts to which the Save-the-Children Fund Portable Kitchens are penetrating, and it is no exaggeration to say that this is the only chance the children will have of being kept alive.

### One Shilling per week covers all expenses for feeding a child.

Owing to the large scale on which the "Save-the-Children Fund" operates and by prudently taking advantage of the World's markets, the expense of feeding a child per day is the amazingly low sum of three-halfpence. A SHILLING A WEEK COVERS ALL EXPENSES—ADMINISTRATION, FREIGHTS, and INSURANCES AS WELL AS FOOD.

This is a record never yet attained in the history of relief.

### WHAT WILL YOU DO TO SAVE A CHILD?

Remember—while you are reading these words little children lie stretched upon the snow-covered roadways or in the hospitals, breathing their last breath. They are beyond human aid. Thousands of others are following them as surely as night follows day. It is up to you, as it is to every Briton, to put out your hand and save at least one! Do not let them all perish miserably! Give every penny you can afford, and bear in mind that every shilling you give feeds a child for a week. Mercy is the greatest attribute of mankind. Show your mercy by giving at once to the "Save-the-Children Fund" so that every possible child may be saved from disaster. Send the most generous contribution you can to-day and address it to LORD WEARDALE, CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE OF

**"SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND,"**  
(ROOM 659).

26 Golden Square, Regent Street, London, W.1

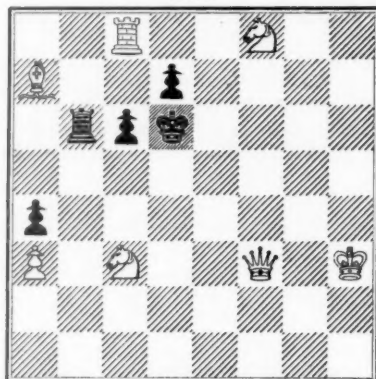
### BRITISH DISTRESS.

The "Save the Children Fund" now, as hitherto, is distributing funds for the relief of British Children. All who send money ear-marked "British Relief" may rest assured that it is used exclusively for British Child Relief.

## Chess

PROBLEM No. 3.  
By W. GRIMSHAW.

BLACK



WHITE

White to play and mate in two moves.

Solutions should be addressed to the Chess Editor of the  
SATURDAY REVIEW, and reach him before Dec. 3.

PROBLEM No. 2.

Solution:

WHITE:

(1) Q—Kt. 8.

(2) Mates accordingly.

Correct from A. S. Brown, Rev. W. Marson, R. M. Merchant and A. Lewis.

Readers are reminded that the 1st prox. is the last day for entries in the various tourneys due to begin at Hastings in Christmas week.

## "MASTERS"—AND OTHERS.

It is usual to bestow the title "master" upon a chess player who has achieved various ascertained distinctions, those who have never sought such being, however accomplished, merely *players*; yet we recall amateurs (folk who have had better things to do with their time than devote it wholly to chess) who were at least equal to some of the minor "masters" in skill over the board, and the probability is that such amateurs get far more enjoyment out of chess than do masters, for these last may never forget their reputation (which generally provides their bread and margarine), while the amateur is at no such disadvantage. The fact is, there has never been and never will be a master of chess, the saying attributed to the most brilliant player that ever lived—that chess is "a Rook better than the best man that ever sat down to it"—being accepted as true by all who know much of the game. Chess is a star of first magnitude in the firmament of amusements, but the professional player almost always has to glimpse that star through a thick mist; and the name of that mist is Poverty.

A Beautiful Old End Game:—White: K, Q-R6; R, Q-R7. Black: K, Q-Kt sq.; P, Q-B7. White to play and draw.  
(Solutions invited and acknowledged.)

## Books Received

## ESSAYS AND BELLES LETTRES

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"For the fact is that every page of the book is vitalized with a compelling sense of reality, and a power of appeal to the mental vision which renders it one of the most remarkable—I think I may safely say the most remarkable—pieces of literary work the war has produced. To be sure, Mr. Filson Young is the favoured possessor of all those qualities which go to fine achievement in sea narrative. He was steeped in what may be termed the naval sense before the war. He has a great wealth of what Tennyson calls 'the finer fancy.' And he is master of a style which gives us pictures of delicate colouring, yet sentient in every detail. . . . The opening days of the war are drawn for us in a skilfully linked-up chain of masterly grey silhouettes. The spirit of the real thing breathes in every page; we do not merely visualize the *Lion* as we read; we are actually living on board of her.

"Naturally, the biggest phase of this big book is that which covers the battle of the Dogger Bank. Mr. Filson Young does not pretend to make history. But he can certainly claim to magnetise it. No super-perfect film of the whole conflict could give us a more minute and yet more spacious panorama of the rushing, roaring battle. We understand everything, because everything is so graphically limned. And, with perfect fidelity, the reasons for the disappointing ending are told, unsparingly, and with the consummate knowledge which is only possible to the man who saw it all and is fearless of the truth."

—**Sir Herbert Russell, in The Western Mercury.**

"In his book 'With the Battle Cruisers' he takes us behind the scenes and gives us a most illuminating account of the life in the Service, both ashore and afloat, while his story of the Dogger Bank engagement is probably the best story of a modern naval battle that has yet been written. For Mr. Filson Young witnessed from the foretop of Admiral Beatty's flagship, the opening stages, and his story is really a fine piece of restrained literary realism."

—**Pall Mall Gazette.**

"Every line of this work recalls the grey North Sea in its various moods; every pen picture of the author's all-too-brief experiences with the *Lion* is drawn with a sure and vivid touch that makes the purple darkness of a night at sea a terrifying reality and the beauty of a Scapa dawn a satisfying pleasure. The book moves in a quiet quaint beauty of style which is peculiar to the author, but the driving spirit is that of Admiral of the Fleet Lord Beatty, whose attractive personality breathes in every page."—**Sunday Times.**

"Mr. Filson Young had the rare advantage of finding himself placed on the staff of Admiral Beatty in the *Lion*, flagship of the Battle Cruiser Squadron, and in that famous ship he served from November, 1914, until after the Battle of the Dogger Bank. He witnessed tremendous events, and lived the life of the Fleet in its most strenuous time. He was a trained observer and a skilled writer, and has thus produced a volume full of the rarest interest, which is entertaining in every chapter."—**The Observer.**

"It is hardly a fair view of a book which as serious criticism reaches a high standard to deal with it as merely casting blame. The value of Mr. Filson Young's narrative, to begin with, is that it gives a vivid and complete account of naval life and service under war conditions. Mr. Filson Young saw life in the Navy through the fresh vision of the volunteer. As a student of naval affairs he knew much. When he had donned the uniform he became a keen and intelligent observer, the more intelligent because, to do him justice, he was content to sit at the feet of men versed in practice. It is quite clear that, far from forming his judgments hastily, he formed them carefully, and his work has gained from his not having, as he states, set pen to paper until two years after the war. It is a wonderfully lucid description, sober as usual in phrasing, but clear cut in statement."—**Westminster Gazette.**

"It is a vivid, interesting, and amusing narrative, told by an eye-witness who is a master of crystal clear English and who generally avoids the pitfalls of fine writing. . . . A living portrayal of life at sea in war-time, all the more absorbing because it is not, like so many other books, written for the purpose of creating a desired impression."—**Manchester Guardian.**

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